

Jan. 20, 1986

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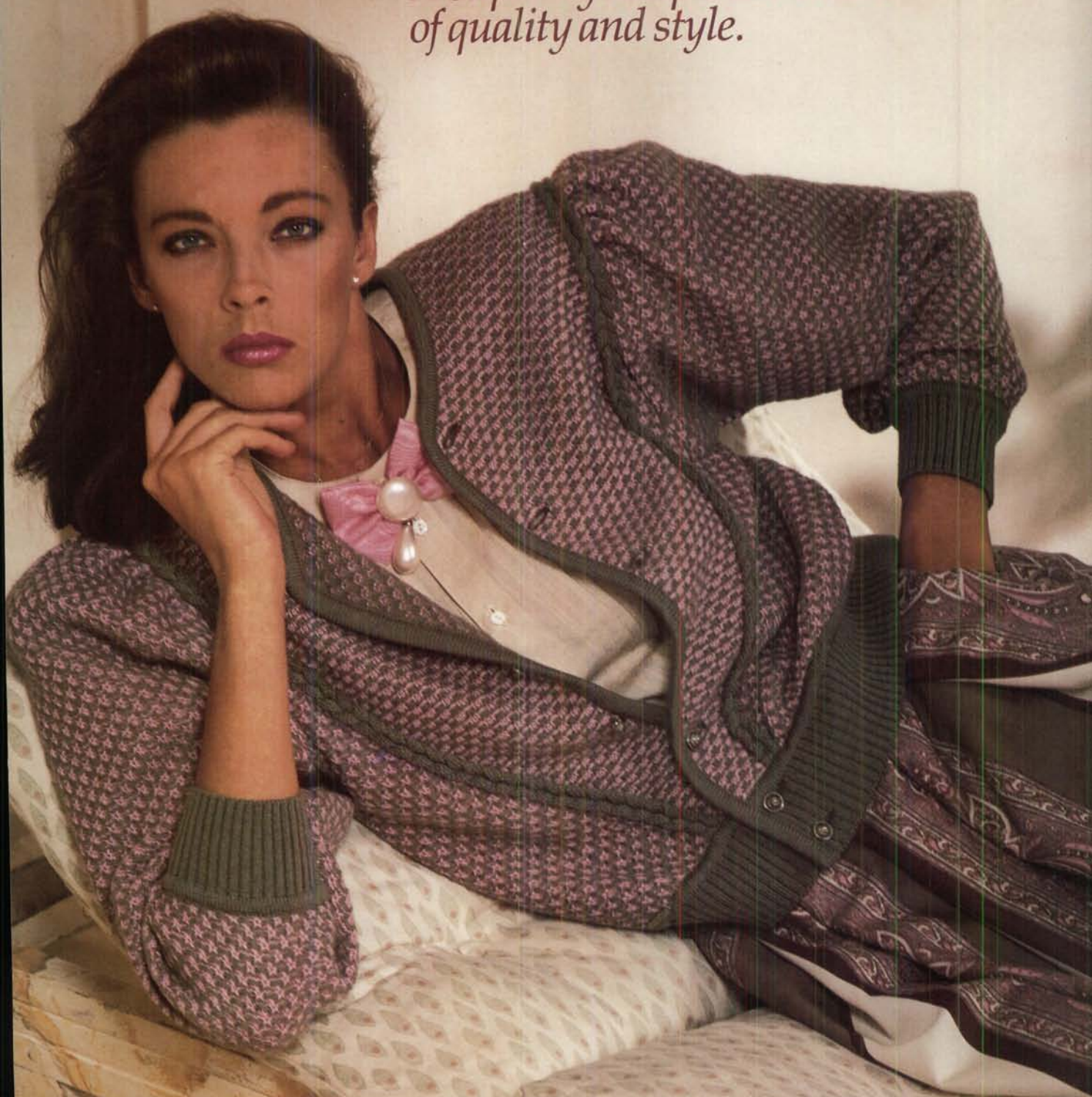
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THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

AUNT DAN & LEMON—A series of extended conversations about good and evil, interspersed with melodrama. The author, Wallace Shawn, plays three roles to great comic effect; other members of the superb cast are Kathryn Pogson, Linda Hunt, Lynsey Baxter, and Linda Bassett. The admirable direction is by Max Stafford-Clark. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/4/85.) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinees Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

BENEFACORS—Glenn Close, Sam Waterston, Mary Beth Hurt, and Simon Jones in a cleverly constructed and eloquently written play by Michael Frayn, the burden of which is that attempting to do good in the world is a perilous adventure. (1/6/86) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

BIG RIVER—A musical version of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." Twain's great novel has been respectfully dealt with in a book by William Hauptman, with music and lyrics by Roger Miller. Daniel H. Jenkins plays Huck, Ron Richardson plays Jim, and Clint Allen plays Tom. Heidi Landesman has provided an unusually evocative setting—somehow, she has managed to put the Mississippi River on a stage. (5/13/85) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

BLOOD KNOT—After a quarter of a century, Athol Fugard's play about the anguish of black life in South Africa has become a classic. This production, starring Fugard and Zakes Mokae and directed by Fugard, is unlikely ever to be surpassed. (12/23/85) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

CIRCLE REPERTORY COMPANY—Nancy Donohue's romantic comedy **THE BEACH HOUSE**, which is sometimes amusing, sometimes just silly, seems to belong more to the late thirties than to the present. Its flaws are more than redeemed by the beguiling performance of Swoosie Kurtz as Her, by the splendid performance of George Grizzard as Him, and by the touching performance of Robert Leonard as his fifteen-year-old son. Melvin Bernhardt was the deft director. (12/30/85) (99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinees Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Jan. 26.)

CORPSE!—Keith Baxter and Milo O'Shea carry on like happy schoolchildren in this improbable murder mystery, and they make us feel happy, too. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

CURSE OF THE STARVING CLASS—A revival of Sam Shepard's brilliant, humorous, passionate play. (9/2/85) (890 Theatre, Broadway at 19th St. 533-8834. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinees Saturdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.)

DAMES AT SEA—A revival of a musical by Jim Wise (score) and George Haimsohn and Robin Miller (book and lyrics). (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

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DECEMBER SEVENTH—A play by George Rattner, presented by Henry Street Settlement's New Federal Theatre. (Theatre Guinevere, 15 W. 28th St. 679-9071. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Feb. 2.)

EQUITY LIBRARY THEATRE—A revival of the 1979 musical **THEY'RE PLAYING OUR SONG** (book by Neil Simon, music by Marvin Hamlisch, and lyrics by Carole Bayer Sager) is the fourth in this season's series of eight productions. (103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinees Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Feb. 2. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

GERTRUDE STEIN AND A COMPANION—A play by Win Wells, about Miss Stein and Alice B. Toklas, with Jan Miner and Marian Seldes. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinees Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

THE GOLDEN LAND—An extremely sentimental musical about Jewish immigrants to the United States. The company of three men and three women includes a fine singer named Marc Krause. (12/2/85) (Second

Avenue Theatre, 189 Second Ave., at 12th St. 674-1460. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 1 and 5.)

HAY FEVER—It is hard to imagine a more delightful production of Noël Coward's youthful comedy about a flirtatious actress in her middle years and the family with which she has more or less absent-mindedly surrounded herself. Rosemary Harris heads a superlative cast, directed by Brian Murray. (12/23/85) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

I'M NOT RAPPAPORT—Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park is given an expert performance by Cleavon Little and Judd Hirsch. (6/17/85) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST—A revival of the 1895 Oscar Wilde comedy. (Samuel Beckett, 412 W. 42nd St. 594-2826. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinees Wednesday and Saturday at 2:30, and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Jan. 19.)

IN THE BOOM BOOM ROOM—A newly rewritten version of David Rabe's 1973 play, with Liz McDonald. (South Street Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

IT'S ONLY A PLAY—A comedy by Terrence McNally. (Manhattan Theatre Club at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Nightly

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Jan. 19.)

JEROME KERN GOES TO HOLLYWOOD—A revue conceived and directed by David Kernan, with songs by the composer, a book by Dick Vosburgh, and lyrics by Ira Gershwin, Dorothy Fields, and others. The production was originally seen in London last season. Previews through Wednesday, Jan. 22. Opens officially on Thursday, Jan. 23. (Ritz, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 7. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

JERRY'S GIRLS—An all-female non-musical, in which three well-known performers—Dorothy Loudon, Chita Rivera, and Leslie Uggams—do their best to pretend they are not miscast as they spend the evening singing a very large number of Jerry Herman's all too readily memorable songs. (1/6/86) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

JONIN'—The characters here are members of a fraternity at a black college, who ceaselessly subject one another to merciless pranks and verbal mayhem, beginning to end. The play is abrasive and tough to watch, but there is life in it, all the same. Gerard Brown makes his debut as dramatist. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

LEMON SKY—A fine revival of Lanford Wilson's play about a man's recollections of the summer he spent, at the age of seventeen, with his father's family in California. Jeff Daniels and Jill Eikenberry (as stepmother) do very well in the leading roles. (12/23/85) (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Saturday at 2 and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Jan. 19.)

A LIE OF THE MIND—Sam Shepard has devised a masterful comedy in this frightening tale of two Western families bound together by a dreadful marriage. The performances, under Mr. Shepard's direction, are extremely good, especially those by Amanda Plummer, Geraldine Page, Harvey Keitel, and Ann Wedgeworth. (12/16/85) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Sundays at 2:30.)

LIGHT OPERA OF MANHATTAN—Presenting Gilbert and Sullivan's **THE MIKADO**. (Norman Thomas, 111 E. 33rd St. 532-6180. Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 3:30 and 8; and Sundays at 3:30.)

LILLIAN—Zoe Caldwell in a one-woman play by William Luce, based on Lillian Hellman's autobiographical works. Robert Whitehead is the director. Preview Wednesday, Jan. 15. Opens officially on Thursday, Feb. 23. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

MIRROR REPERTORY COMPANY—The first two in a series of three revivals performed in alternating repertory. Mason Adams and Tovah Feldshuh in William Saroyan's **THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE**. . . . Maxim Gorky's **CHILDREN OF THE SUN**, with Michael Moriarty and Elizabeth Franz. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 5 and Sundays at 3. For information about play scheduling, call 223-6440.)

MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION—Uta Hagen gives a stunning performance, in Shaw's brilliant play, as a woman of lowly origins who has made a fortune from a string of brothels. There is distinguished acting, as well, by Pamela Reed, as her daughter, and Harris Yulin, as her business partner. (12/30/85) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2. After Sunday, Jan. 19, no performances until Thursday, Jan. 23, when the show will reopen at the Haft Theatre, 227 W. 27th St. For tickets, call 420-1883.)

THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD—Old-fashioned, mock-Victorian nonsense, with book and songs by Rupert Holmes and direction by Wilford Leach. The cast includes George Rose, Betty Buckley, and Cleo Laine, to say



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nothing of the audience itself, which is put to work in the second act. (12/16/85) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

NUNSENSE—A musical by Dan Goggin. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

THE ODD COUPLE—Neil Simon has turned his successful comedy of twenty years ago, which was about a couple of male bachelors, into an unsuccessful comedy about a couple of female bachelors. The cast is headed by Sally Struthers and Brenda Vaccaro. (6/24/85) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

PENN & TELLER—A sublime combination of conjuring and comedy. Penn Jillette does the talking; Teller is silent. (5/6/85) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

PERSONALS—A jaunty and romantic little revue about people looking for companionship of one sort or another in the classified ads. Talent abounds. Witty book and lyrics and tuneful score; performances by six gifted young actors. (Minetta Lane, 18-22 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN AND THE SHAWL—Two brief, eerie plays by David Mamet. "The Shawl," a wonder, is about a clairvoyant who may be a charlatan (but perhaps not), his sly apprentice-lover, and a wary woman client. "Prairie du Chien," also good, is set aboard a train on which a man tells a horror story while a gin game erupts into violence. Both plays are performed to perfection under Gregory Mosher's direction, with Mike Nussbaum, Lindsay Crouse, and W. H. Macy, among other fine actors. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2. Closes Sunday, Feb. 2.)

THE SEARCH FOR SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE—A show that has nothing whatever to do with its title, which is just as well. It does have Lily Tomlin clowning her merry way through a number of skits by Jane Wagner, many of them very funny. (10/7/85) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 7 and 10; and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN—What could be more bizarre than an effortful re-creation onstage of what a movie once did with consummate ease and grace? Twyla Tharp has directed and choreographed this sad, enormous oddity. (7/15/85) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

SONG AND DANCE—The only two reasons for going to see this curious mishmash of a show are Bernadette Peters and Victor Barbee, and perhaps those two reasons are enough. (9/30/85) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

TODAY I AM A FOUNTAIN PEN—A play by Israel Horowitz, presented by the American Jewish Theatre. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 831-8603. Tuesdays through Thursdays and Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 2.)

WHAT'S A NICE COUNTRY LIKE YOU ... DOING IN A STATE LIKE THIS?—An updated version of the 1973 satirical revue by the original creators, composer Cary Hoffman and lyricist Ira Gassman. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

LONG RUNS—BILOXI BLUES: A comedy that verges on autohagiography, the hero being the author, Neil Simon, as a young Army draftee who, in 1943, is struggling to assume the mantle of writer. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Nightly, except Sundays and Thursdays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS: Another remembrance of things past by Neil Simon. This time, the hero is a sex-obsessed fifteen-year-old. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

LA CAGE AUX FOLLES: A dazzling production of a musical that has little wit and a lot of phony sentimentality about the tenderhearted family life of homosexuals. The music, by Jerry Herman, is Broadway-romantic. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

CATS: Ezra Pound nicknamed T. S. Eliot "Old Possum," and under that name Eliot wrote a collection of poems about cats, and now the cats are on display on Broadway, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, scenery by John Napier, and direction by Trevor Nunn. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

A CHORUS LINE: A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

THE FANTASTICKS: 10,704 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

THE FOREIGNER: A very funny play by the late Larry Shue, with good performances by every single member of the company. Jerry Zaks was the admirable director. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

42ND STREET: Once upon a time there was a silly-wonderful Warner Brothers musical about a young hoover who goes on in place of a disabled star and herself becomes a star overnight. The legitimate musical that has been fashioned from the movie musical is just as silly but by no means as wonderful. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS: Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through

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A SOLDIER'S STORY	1733022	48 HOURS	2022002	YENTL	0895082
TERMS OF ENDEARMENT	2014002	MAD MAX	7109132	BLADE RUNNER	3104082
PINOCCHIO	5361102	STAR WARS	0564162	WARGAMES	0828002
TRUE GRIT	2028042	THE KARATE KID	1710092	PORKY'S	0775112
THE SURE THING	3136012	THE SOUND OF MUSIC	0039212	THE ALAMO	0583052
STAR TREK III—The Search for Spock	2016082	BREATHLESS	7116142	REVENGE OF THE NERDS	0925022
THE COTTON CLUB	3100032	JANE FONDA'S WORKOUT CHALLENGE	5260042	PATTON	0043092
TRADING PLACES	2017072	CASABLANCA	0507162	WEST SIDE STORY	0505342
PLACES IN THE HEART	0978082	MR. MOM	7104182	CABARET	4001272
THE FLAMINGO KID	7135032	ROBIN HOOD (Disney)	5299092	ARSENIC AND OLD LACE	0735102
STARMAN	1723042	THE WOMAN IN RED	7105172	RED RIVER	7507032
FLASHDANCE	2018062	DUMBO	5251052	MAKING MICHAEL JACKSON'S THRILLER	7103012
JOHNNY DANGEROUSLY	0880042	LAWRENCE OF ARABIA	1514072	THE GRADUATE	3103002
WUTHERING HEIGHTS	3128032	THE AFRICAN QUEEN	0511022	OCTOPUSSY	0856052
A NIGHTMARE ON ELM ST.	3288072	GHOSTBUSTERS	1742012	A PASSAGE TO INDIA	1741022
AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN	2021012	BODY DOUBLE	1713062	TRON	5283012
MICKI AND MAUDE	1732032	CLEOPATRA (Taylor & Burton)	0579012	20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA	5378032
REDS	2029032	STRIPES	1513162	CITIZEN KANE	5501032
BALL OF FIRE	3139082	THE LONGEST DAY	0577032	THE MALTESE FALCON	0508072
ROMANCING THE STONE	0894082	BACHELOR PARTY	0926012	THE NATURAL	1649052
THE BIG CHILL	1527022	AIRPLANE	2033072	DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER	0599072
DEATH WISH	2027052	CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND—Special Edition	1510192	SPLASH	5304022
THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING	0948052	ANNIE	1516052		
THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK	0910092				

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinees Sundays at 2 and 5.)... **OH! CAL-CUTTA!** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinees Sundays at 3.)

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—Tentative schedule—Wednesday, Jan. 15, at 8: "Antique Epigraphs," "Glass Pieces," "In Memory of..." and "Fancy Free."... **Thursday, Jan. 16, at 8:** "Donizetti Variations," "Davidsbündlertänze," and "Gounod Symphony."... **Friday, Jan. 17, at 8:** "Allegro Brillante," "Antique Epigraphs," "In Memory of..." and "Fancy Free."... **Saturday, Jan. 18, at 2:** "In the Night," "The Cage," "Pas de Deux," and "Gounod Symphony."... **Saturday, Jan. 18, at 8:** "Donizetti Variations," "Antique Epigraphs," "In Memory of..." and "Fancy Free."... **Sunday, Jan. 19, at 1:** "Monumentum pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "In the Night," and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet."... **Sunday, Jan. 19, at 7:** "Antique Epigraphs," "Glass Pieces," "In Memory of..." and "Fancy Free."... **Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 8:** "Rossini Quartets," "Monumentum pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet."... **Wednesday, Jan. 22, at 8:** "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue," "Allegro Brillante," "Eight More," and the opening scene from "A Midsummer Night's Dream." (A benefit performance; for tickets, call 877-7635.)... **Thursday, Jan. 23, at 8:** "Allegro Brillante," "Davidsbündlertänze," and "Glass Pieces."... **Friday, Jan. 24, at 8:** "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue," "Poulenc Sonata," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2."... **Saturday, Jan. 25, at 2:** "Rossini Quartets," "Poulenc Sonata," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2."... **Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8:** "Allegro Brillante," "In Memory of..." and "Gounod Symphony." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Sunday, Feb. 23.)

BALLET DE SANTIAGO—A one-week engagement—Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 7:30, and Wednesday through Friday, Jan. 22-24, at 8: "Roselinda."... **Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 26, at 3 and 7:30:** "Double Clef," "The Storm," and "Three Japanese Dances." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

TANGO ARGENTINO—A troupe of thirty dancers, singers, and musicians. (Mark Hellinger Theatre, 237 W. 51st St. 757-7064. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinees Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

JOYCE THEATRE DANCE FESTIVAL—Final performances—**CLIVE THOMPSON DANCE COMPANY:** Wednesday, Jan. 15, and Saturday, Jan. 18, at 8... **OHAD NAHARIN & DANCERS:** Thursday, Jan. 16, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 19, at 2... **PEGGY LYMAN DANCE COMPANY:** Friday, Jan. 17, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 19, at 7:30... **BILL CRATTY DANCE THEATRE:** Saturday, Jan. 18, at 2. (175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

ELISA MONTE DANCE COMPANY—"Anima," "Pigs & Fishes," "Overture," "VII for VIII," and "Set in Stone." With musical accompaniment by David Van Tieghem and his ensemble. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 7:30; Wednesday through Friday, Jan. 22-24, at 8; Saturday, Jan. 25, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Jan. 26, at 2 and 7:30.)

SUSAN MARSHALL & COMPANY—A two-week engagement. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Thursdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinees Sundays at 3. Through Sunday, Jan. 26.)

ALVIN AILEY REPERTORY ENSEMBLE—A program of new and repertory works. (Theatre of the Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 864-2929. Wednesday through Friday, Jan. 22-24, at 8, and Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 25-26, at 2 and 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town... **Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives**

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19	20	21	22	23	24	25

that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Michael Feinstein sings and plays piano in the Oak Room Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

ANGRY SQUIRE, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A nautically flavored bar and restaurant in beautiful downtown Chelsea. The jazz: Wednesday, Jan. 15, the Tom Varner quartet; Thursday, Jan. 16, the Pat Laing quartet; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 17-18, pianist **DANNY MIXON's** trio; Sunday, Jan. 19, the Bob Cassanova trio; Monday, Jan. 20, the Andy Tuck quintet; Tuesday, Jan. 21, the Mark Barasch trio; Wednesday, Jan. 22, singer Carla White and her trio; Thursday, Jan. 23, the Joel Forrester quartet; and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 24-25, drummer **CHARLI PERSIP's** Super Four. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten. Dining.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—**BLOSSOM DEARIE** is ensconced in this club, singing in her small, delicate, uncomplicated, diction-perfect voice. Early-evening concerts Wednesday through Saturdays from six-thirty to eight-thirty. Harmonica virtuoso **LARRY ADLER** performs Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A dark, large, carpeted club with deep-blue tablecloths and a curvy bar. **SARAH VAUGHAN**, whose voice can be deep blue and curvy, sings here through Sunday, Jan. 19; on Monday, Jan. 20, bassist **HARVIE SWARTZ** will lead a combo; and starting Tuesday, Jan. 21, the **BILLY TAYLOR** trio will trade sets with the **JOE MORELLO** quintet. Sets begin after nine. Jubilant hard-bop trumpeter **TED CURSON** presides over after-hours jam sessions every night but Monday until about four in the morning. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A large-venue pop, rock, folk, and jazz club with, thank heavens, tables and chairs. Friday and Saturday, Jan. 17-18, Louis Blanche & Constant Creation, featuring R. & B-ists **ERIC GALE**, **DR. JOHN**, **DAVID (FATHEAD) NEWMAN**, **BERNARD PURDIE**, and others; Sunday, Jan. 19, **ROGER MC GUINN** and Jonathan Edwards; Wednesday, Jan. 22, violinist **MICHAEL URBANIK**; Friday, Jan. 24, 10,000 Maniacs; and Saturday, Jan. 25, the Uncle Floyd Show. Shows Sundays through Tuesdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A real New York bar; it has dark wood panelling, Type A conversationalists, and some very good piano-bass teams. **HILTON RUIZ** works with **SANTI DEBRIANO** through Saturday, Jan. 18; on Sunday, Jan. 19, **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and **SANTI DEBRIANO** will drop in; and on Monday, Jan. 20, **RAY BRYANT** and **JIMMY ROWSER** will begin a six-night visit. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-

1600)—The Café Carlyle is a cozy, elegant room where **GEORGE SHEARING** can be found singing breathily and playing piano melodically with support from bassist **DON THOMPSON**. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. Dining... **Over in the Belemans Bar**, pianist **BARBARA CARROLL** is singing and soloing Tuesdays through Saturdays from ten.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Exposed rafters, weathered, splintery wood posts, decrepit neon beer signs, and a general ramshackle feel. All this and rock and roll, too. Monday is showcase night. Shows nightly from long after nine-thirty.

EAGLE TAVERN, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—Bluegrass, old-time string-band music, and folk-jazz. A partial lineup: Saturday, Jan. 18, **SKYLINE**, with **TONY TRISCHKA**, and Saturday, Jan. 25, Out to Lunch. There is Irish music on Mondays and Fridays. Music from eight on Wednesdays and from nine Mondays, Fridays, and Saturdays.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—A velvet-and-mirror-walled below-stairs music room. Cool School-veteran trumpeter and singer **CHET BAKER** guides a quartet through Sunday, Jan. 19, and on Tuesday, Jan. 21, percussionist **NANA VASCONCELOS** and the **NEW YORK SAMBA BAND** will move in. Mondays are the property of guitarist and recording innovator **LES PAUL's** trio. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight. Dining.

FOLK CITY, 130 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (254-8449)—The partial schedule: Wednesday, Jan. 15, the Dead Milkmen, the Redeemers, and the Brood; Friday, Jan. 17, Nanci Griffith and Tom Intondi; Wednesday, Jan. 22, **SALEM 66** and Dinosaur; Thursday, Jan. 23, Ilene Weiss; Friday, Jan. 24, veteran folkies **CAROLYN HESTER** and **PATRICK SKY**. Saturdays and Sundays are comedy nights, and Mondays are hootenanny nights. Shows usually begin at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty.

FREDDY'S, 308 E. 49th St. (888-1633)—**JANE HARVEY** is singing here at nine through Saturday, Jan. 18, and the **RONNY WHYTE** trio remains to perform Tuesdays through Saturdays from ten-thirty. Dining.

HANRATTY'S, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—A spiffy back-room haunt for traditional-jazz pianists and their admirers. **ROGER KELLAWAY** and his admirers can be found on the premises Tuesdays through Saturdays. Sundays are claimed by Keith MacDonald, and Mondays by **DICK HYMAN**. Music Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER SALOON, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant, low-keyed bar and restaurant in the piano-bass district. **ROLAND HANNA**, a powerful, percussive, and undulating pianist, is at the keyboard through Saturday, Jan. 18, and starting Tuesday, Jan. 21, **FRED HERSCH** and **GEORGE MRZ** will handle the piano-bass duties. Music Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-thirty. Dining.

LONE STAR CAFE, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—You can tell you're in New York and not in Texas; when they serve you a hamburger, they bring a jar of Dijon mustard along with it. Wednesday, Jan. 15, Sussman-Lawrence and the Washington Squares; Thursday, Jan. 16, **WHO IT IS**; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 17-18, **ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL**; Sunday and Monday, Jan. 19-20, the **MC GARRIGLE SISTERS**; Tuesday, Jan. 21, Bay Area Night, with **JORMA KAUKONEN**, **JACK CASADY**, Kingfish, and others; and Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 22-23, guitarist Pat Travers. Music after nine. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—**BARBARA COOK**, who can sing standards just like ringing a bell, goes on at nine and eleven Tuesdays through Saturdays. On Monday nights from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen is often found playing celebrity clarinet with a traditional-jazz combo. Dining. Closed Sundays.

MIKELL'S, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A longtime music hangout on the upper West Side. Some of the schedule: Wednesday, Jan. 15, Fazz, and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 17-18, the **MICHEL CAMILO** sextet. Music from about ten. Dining.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—The mostly



rock-and-roll roster: Thursday, Jan. 16, the Residents and Snakefinger; Saturday, Jan. 18, **BERNIE WORRELL, DEFUNKT**, and the Pressure Boys; and Friday, Jan. 24, the Dictators, the Rattlers, and the Sic F*cks. Shows begin after nine Mondays through Thursdays, and after eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dancing.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—On its busy weekends, this club feels like the rush hour in Rio. Wednesday, Jan. 15, Commissioned, a gospel group; Thursday, Jan. 16, **MARIO RIVERA & THE SALSA REFUGEES**; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 17-18, **MIKATA**; Tuesday, Jan. 21, Mario Toledo; and Wednesday, Jan. 22, **HECTOR LAVOE**. Music from ten. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Pianist **MC COY TYNER** heads his trio through Sunday, Jan. 19, and on Tuesday, Jan. 21, bassist **RON CARTER** will move in with his quartet. Mondays belong to **GIL EVANS** and his **BIG BAND**. Shows from about ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A simple basic blues and rock club. The partial schedule: Wednesday, Jan. 15, Kristi Rose, a Kentucky rockabillyette with a throaty, Brenda Lee-reminiscent voice; Thursday, Jan. 16, Loup Gurou Zydeco; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 17-18, blues singer and guitarist **OTIS RUSH**; Monday, Jan. 20, Alan Mann, the Stigalators, and the Insane Unknowns; and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 24-25, **BUSTER POINDEXTER & THE BANSHEES OF BLUE**. Music after nine-thirty.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the Top of the Gate on Fridays and Saturdays, the **HARLEM BLUES & JAZZ BAND** participates in swing-music-and-jitterbug evenings that begin after nine. . . . Downstairs, on Sunday, Jan. 19, at eight-thirty and ten-thirty, **LIONEL HAMPTON** and the **FRANK FOSTER-FRANK WESS** quintet will all be present. . . . Out on the Terrace, pianist **JOHN O'NEAL** is on hand through Sunday, Jan. 19, and on Tuesday, Jan. 21, **HAROLD MABERN** and **JAMIL NASSER** will begin a nightly bluesy piano-bass workout. Jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** drops by on Tuesdays, too. Music from nine-thirty.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now fifty-one years old, has been described by Max Gordon, the wise proprietor and resident father figure, as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." Alto saxophonist **CHARLES MC PHERSON** heads up a quintet through Sunday, Jan. 19, and on Tuesday, Jan. 21, saxophonist, flutist, bebopster, humorist, and singer **JAMES MOODY** will arrive with his quartet. Monday nights are Blast-Off Nights for the **MEL LEWIS BIG BAND**. Music from nine-thirty.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Past the steam tables of piping-hot student food, beyond the pinball machines is a room full of jazz. Saxophonist **WILLIS (GATOR TAIL) JACKSON**, who plays R. & B. and bebop, is here through Sunday, Jan. 19, and starting Wednesday, Jan. 22, saxophonist and Satchmo-inspired vocalist **BIG NICK NICHOLAS** will be leading his quintet. On Tuesdays, trumpeter Valery Ponomarev & Universal Language occupy the bandstand. Music from about nine.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A SoHo-sleek and spacious bar and restaurant with a musical passageway between them. **RAY BRYANT** and **JIMMY ROWSER** live in it through Saturday, Jan. 18, and starting Monday, Jan. 20, **HILTON RUIZ** and **MAJOR HOLLEY** will take up residence. Sundays are allotted to guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE**. Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

HIGHLIGHTS IN JAZZ—Marty Napoleon, Arvell Shaw, Panama Francis, and others in a salute to Louis Armstrong. (Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. 598-2027. Thursday, Jan. 16, at 8.)

JAKI BYARD AND THE APOLLO STOMPERS—Jazz Cultural Theatre, Eighth Ave. between 28th and 29th Sts. 502-4300. Friday and Saturday, Jan. 17-18, at 10 and midnight.

HEAVENLY JAZZ CONCERT SERIES—The third in a series of five concerts, this one performed by Kenny Davern, Warren Vaché, Jr., and others. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth

BEAUTY REPORT

HAIR CARE

WHY YOUR FAVORITE SHAMPOO WILL WORK BETTER IF YOU STOP USING IT FOR 14 DAYS.

It's exasperating. The very shampoo that has left your hair so silky and clean, the shampoo you depend on—subtly, then noticeably stops working. That fresh softness you prize so much in clean hair is gone. Your hair looks limp . . . dull . . . blah.

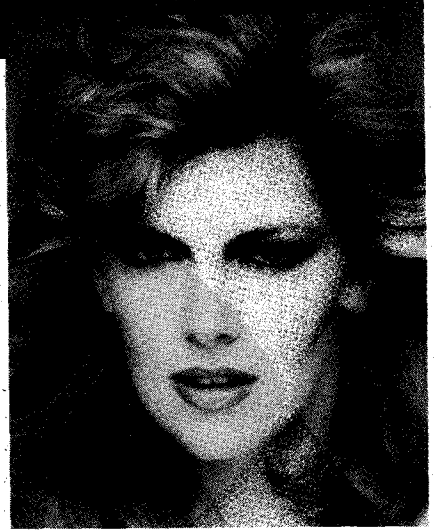
Why why why? "Shampoo build-up" is the reason. Each washing, even by fine shampoos, leaves a shampoo "residue." Sadly, certain cleansing mixtures, and conditioning agents, if they are effective, leave a telltale residue that has been measured precisely in laboratory studies.

Recent tests on 15 quality shampoos show that residues keep accumulating each time you shampoo. It's a fact of hair life!

Getting rid of the build-up. Make no mistake. You must, temporarily, switch to a shampoo with super rinsability. One that has gently proven its power to revitalize the hair. And don't put it off. Shampoo build-up is more than unattractive: it can impair the soft feel of your hair . . . its manageability . . . and it can eventually harm your hair.

A single wash reduces residue by 70% to 90%. "Test results indicate a single wash with Neutrogena® Shampoo was adequate to remove in excess of 90% of the residue. Even with conditioners, which are far more substantive to the hair, a single wash with Neutrogena removes 70% of the residue!"

*Excerpt from Neutrogena Skin Care Institute Report.



Which shampoo rinses the best? According to laboratory tests of 15 quality shampoos, Neutrogena Shampoo ranked No. 1, and "demonstrated consistently superior rinsability with almost no build-up itself."

The clincher: in addition to instantly freeing your hair from most build-up in a single washing, Neutrogena leaves a scant residue, a negligible trace compared to all the other shampoos tested.

If you feel you want to revitalize your hair, try Neutrogena Shampoo for 14 days. Think of it as a freshening "vacation" . . . and afterwards, your hair will respond again happily to your favorite shampoo. If you use your Neutrogena as often as needed, your favorite shampoo will keep on being your favorite!

Neutrogena Shampoo is sold with a satisfaction-or-your-money-back guarantee. It is available at better drug stores and cosmetic counters. Look for it—in the white box with the brown band.

©1985 Neutrogena Corp.

ATTENTION: MOUSSE/GEL USERS: Daily use of mousses and gels gradually builds up residue. Hair resists styling, loses shine. Most shampoos just can't cope. But just completed tests show high-rinsability Neutrogena Shampoo is able to remove an average 90% of mousse or gel residue in 1 washing. (Residue Removal Study, April, 1985. Neutrogena Laboratories.)

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Ave. at 90th St. Sunday, Jan. 19, at 5. For information about tickets, call 369-8040.)

VINTAGE JAZZ AT THE VINEYARD—Sunday, Jan. 19, at 6: Ed Polcer and Jane Jarvis. . . . ¶ Sunday, Jan. 19, at 9: The Duke's Men. (Vineyard Theatre, 309 E. 26th St. 683-0696.)

"LIVING THE DREAM"—Harry Belafonte, Bill Cosby, Dionne Warwick, and others in a benefit concert saluting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600. Monday, Jan. 20, at 5.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

HORST ANTES—A retrospective of paintings. Through Feb. 22. (Lefebvre, 47 E. 77th St.)

FRIEDEL DZUBAS—Recent acrylics by a color-field painter. Through Feb. 6. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

PAUL FRAZIER—Abstract wood sculptures. Through Jan. 28. (Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St.)

DARRYL HUGHTO / MORTON LIVINGSTON SCHAMBERG (1881-1918)—Abstract paintings. / Pastel abstractions derived from machine forms. Through Feb. 1. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

LEON KELLY (1901-82)—A retrospective of paintings and drawings by a Surrealist. Through Feb. 8. (A. M. Adler, 21 E. 67th St.)

BARRY LEDOUX—Sculptures. Through Feb. 1. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

CAROLE ROBB—Oil paintings depicting the myth of Apollo and Daphne in a contemporary setting. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

GEORGES ROUAULT (1871-1958) and **GEORG BASELITZ / WLADIMIR ZABOTIN** (1884-1967)—Prints by these two artists which are shown together. / Abstract drawings, most done in pencil. Through Feb. 1. (Kren, 22 E. 65th St.)

JON SCHUELER—Three very large cloud studies of the Isle of Skye as seen from the painter's home. Through Feb. 1. (Perlow, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

DAVID SHAPIRO—New abstract paintings. Through Feb. 1. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

LEONARD STOKES—Paper collages, several of which suggest figures. Through Feb. 12. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

BERNAR VENET—Large pastel drawings of the artist's sculptures. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Castelli Graphics, 4 E. 77th St.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **FOURCADE**, 36 E. 75th St.: Drawings by gallery regulars, who include de Kooning, Heizer, and Rockburne. Through Feb. 8. . . . **STONE**, 48 E. 86th St.: Comic photomontages by John O'Reilly in which he insinuates pictures of himself, usually nude, rubbing elbows with Picasso; abstract paintings and tiny constructions (power boats, for instance), by Charles Mingus III, a son of the musician; and other works. Through Jan. 29.

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

JOSEPH BEUYS—A display of the materials the artist used in a performance work called "Is It About a Bicycle?": a text written on a blackboard, which also has treadmarks from the bicycle (itself on hand). Through Feb. 8. (Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

DEBORAH BUTTERFIELD—Table-size horses cast in bronze. Through Feb. 28. (Heesy, 50 W. 57th St.)

RICHARD CROZIER—Paintings of landscapes common to daily experience—uncultivated roadsides and parking lots, for instance. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

JAMES DEL GROSSO—Representational landscapes and still-lives. Through Friday, Jan. 24. (Grand Central Art Galleries, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

WILLARD DIXON AND JIM TOUCHTON—Recent paintings by two landscapists. Through Jan. 29. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

SONDRA FRECKELTON—Still-lives in pastel and wa-

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tercolor. Through Jan. 29. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

ROBERT GREENE—Expansive paintings of dream-like urban parks populated by fashionable-looking dogs and effete-looking people. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Robert Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

DIETER HACKER—Oils, works on paper, and bronzes. Through Feb. 1. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

REUBEN KADISH / CHARLES BIEDERMAN—Bronze and terra-cotta heads commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the Holocaust. / Small abstractions on paper. They were done about fifty years ago. Through Jan. 30. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.) . . . ¶ **Artists' Choice**, 394 West Broadway, has a retrospective of sculptures and works on paper by Mr. Kadish. Through Feb. 22. (Open Sundays.)

STEPHANIE KIRSCHEN-COLE—Mixed-medium collages using handmade paper. Through Jan. 31. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

CRAIG LANGAGER—Animal sculptures, mostly, including a life-size red-striped zebra. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Siegel, 24 W. 57th St.)

MICHAEL LOEW (1907-85)—A memorial exhibition of abstract paintings and figurative collages. Through Feb. 5. (Pearl, 38 E. 57th St.)

ANDREW LORD—Primarily black earthenware pitchers and other vessels. Through Feb. 1. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

JULES OLITSKI / HANS HOFMANN (1880-1966)—New paintings. Through Feb. 1. / Crayon-and-ink works from the early forties. Through Feb. 8. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

HARVEY QUAYTMAN—New abstract paintings. Through Feb. 1. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

ROBERT RYMAN—New paintings, including two large works on sheets of fibre glass and a triptych of the same material. Through Feb. 15. (Galerie Maecht Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.) . . . ¶ **Castelli**, 420 West Broadway, is showing an eleven-panel painting completed by Mr. Ryman in 1975. Through Feb. 1.

LINDA SOKOLOWSKI—Paintings, drawings, and monotypes. Through Feb. 1. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

WILLIAM WEGMAN / ARCH CONNELLY—A first show of paintings by the well-known photographer. / Paintings and sculptures. Through Feb. 1. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.) . . . ¶ **Daniel Wolf**, 30 W. 57th St., has mounted vintage black-and-white photographs by Mr. Wegman, which the artist has recently furnished with paint, text, and collage. Through Feb. 1. (Open Mondays.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **MARIAN GOODMAN**, 24 W. 57th St.: Drawings by seven influential European artists, among them Broodthaers and Kiefer. Through Feb. 1. (Open Mondays.) . . . **JANIS**, 110 W. 57th St.: Early-twentieth-cen-

tury works—paintings (by Picasso, Braque, Gris, and others), sculptures (by Arp, Ernst, and others), and two Mondrian drawings. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Open Mondays.) . . . **LAMAGNA**, 50 W. 57th St.: Called "REM," after that stage of sleep, a show of dream-imagery works in various mediums by contemporary artists Jonathan Borofsky, Michael Lucero, and others. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. . . . **WUNDERLICH**, 41 E. 57th St.: Works by realist artists unfamiliar on the local scene, among them a first-rate pencil drawing of lobster-pot floats by Richard Davis; watercolors of rocks and fruits by Alan Magee; and a painting of the view from his own porch in a Boston suburb by David Campbell, a retired carpenter. Through Feb. 15.

GALLERIES—SoHo

IDA APPLEBROOG—New paintings, including one, titled "God's White, Too," in which a black couple's reflection is painted in white. Through Feb. 15. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

BILL BECKLEY—A selection of works (photographs with texts, drawings, paintings) completed between 1970 and the present. Through Jan. 29. (Gibson, 568 Broadway.)

PETER BÖMMELS—Paintings, sculptures, and an installation. Through Feb. 1. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

HANNE DARBOVEN—A new work by this Conceptualist which is made up of fifty-four identically framed collages, each one containing a photograph of Hamburg, a postcard of New York, and an ink drawing. Through Feb. 1. (Castelli, 142 Greene St.)

HERMINE FORD—Abstract oil paintings and works on paper. Through Feb. 1. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

LEON GOLUB—Portraits of South African blacks are among these new paintings. Through Feb. 1. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

DAVID HACKER—As a sideline, this young artist dismantles boilers, and he uses the scraps of tubing and plate in his sculptures, six of which are on view, a couple of them ten feet tall. They are painted, and Constructivist in feeling. Through Feb. 1. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

J. M. HAESSLE—Colorful, energetic abstractions by an artist who squeezes oil onto the canvas directly from the tubes, using them as if they were pastel crayons. Through Feb. 2. (Littlejohn-Smith, 133 Greene St. Opens at 1 on Sundays.)

GRACE HARTIGAN—A series of oils called "Painting the Renaissance." Through Jan. 29. (Gruenebaum, 415 West Broadway.)

JÖRG IMMENDORFF—Outsize paintings filled with political symbols, inside jokes about the art world, and colorful grotesqueries by a German artist. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

EVE INGALLS—Large-scale paintings of Western wilderness terrain. Through Feb. 1. (SoHo 20, at 469 Broome St. Opens at noon.)

HELMUT MIDDENDORFF—Recent figurative paintings. Through Feb. 6. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

RICHARD MOCK / ANDREW MENARD—New abstract paintings. / Styrofoam sculptures of monochromatic figures in unlikely positions, some parallel to the floor. Through Feb. 1. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.) . . . ¶ **Mr. Mock** has a second show—paintings dating from 1975 to 1984—at Exit Art, 578 Broadway. (Opens at noon.)

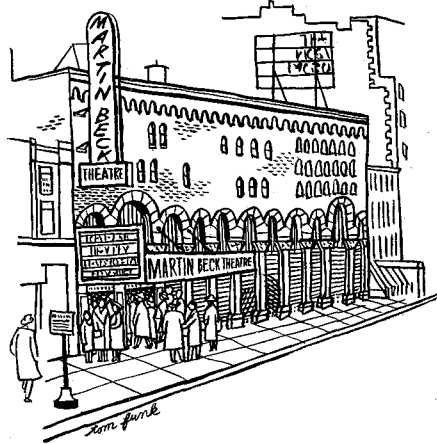
GERALD NICHOLS—Large relief constructions based on other art works—Winslow Homer's painting, "Right and Left," of two ducks being shot down, for instance. Through Feb. 1. (Steinbaum, 132 Greene St.)

ED PASCHKE—New paintings of faces and heads distorted by horizontal lines of color cutting across the canvas. Through Feb. 1. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

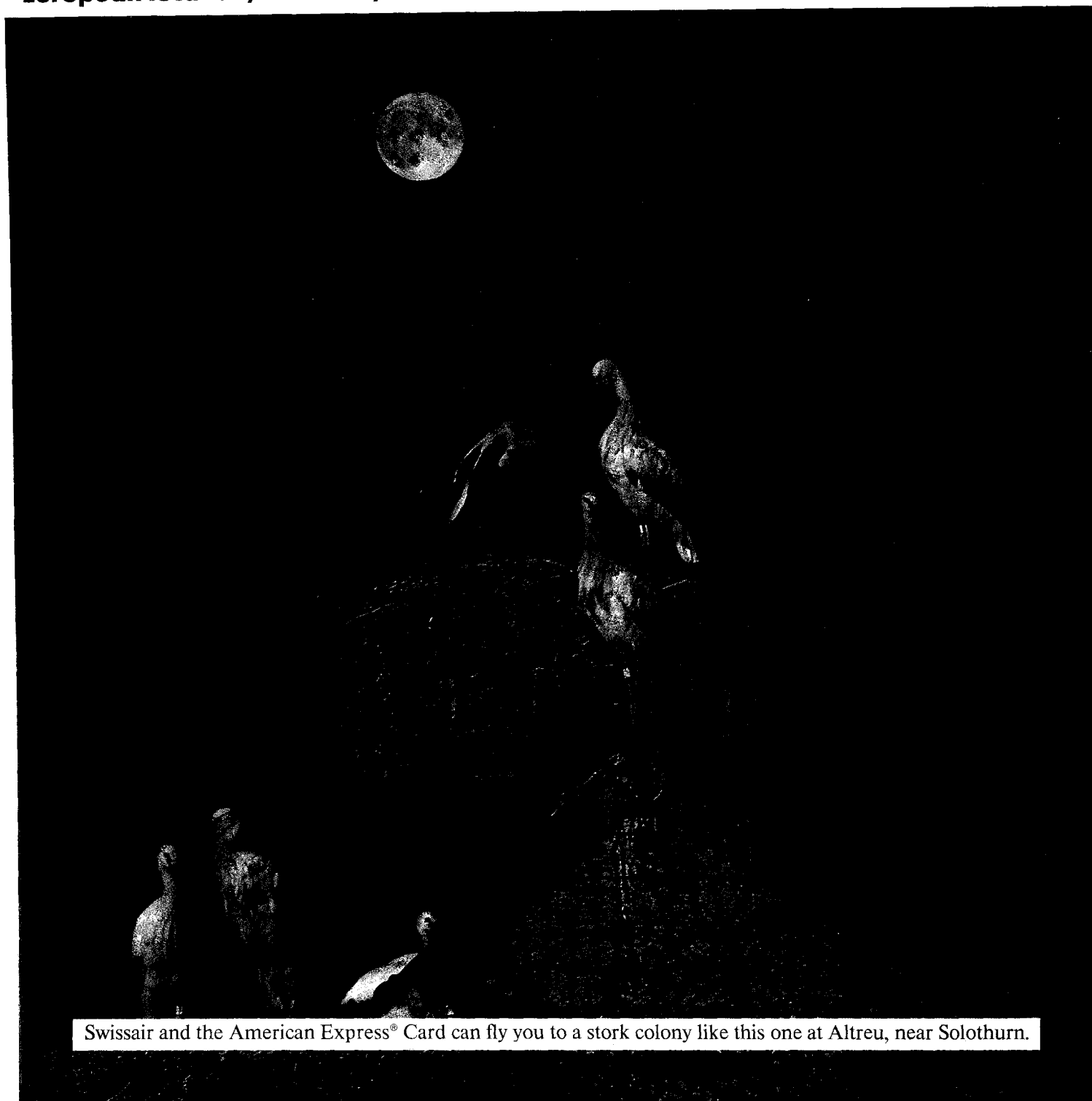
ALISON SAAR—Among the richly varied "new icons" in this show is a life-size sculpture of Sweet Daddy Good Life, whose suit is made of tin from a ceiling, whose palms are gold leaf, and who stands in front of a painting of money falling from the sky like manna. Through Jan. 28. (Knowlton, 153 Mercer St.)

ALAN SHIELDS—New paintings and prints. Through Feb. 1. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

MICHAEL SINGER—Wood-and-stone sculptures,



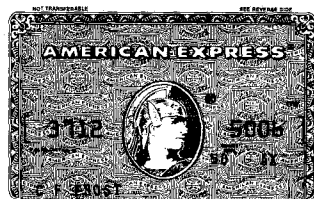
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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plus related drawings. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

JOE STEFANELLI—Abstract Expressionist paintings. Through Feb. 1. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

KRZYSZTOF WODICZKO AND JANA STERBAK—Two installations. Mr. Wodiczko has moved his slide projections indoors to the walls of the 49th Parallel gallery—images of homeless people are projected over images of monuments in Union Square. Miss Sterbak projects text above an illuminated wire sculpture of a headless figure. Through Feb. 15. (49th Parallel, 420 West Broadway.)

PHILIP WOFFORD—Large abstract paintings. Through Feb. 5. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **PAM ADLER**, 578 Broadway: Abstract works by three painters, Sharon Gold, Judith Murray, and Lynn Umlauf. Through Feb. 22. . . . **A.I.R.**, 63 Crosby St.: Sculptures and paintings by Amara Geffen, Ursula Kavanagh, Carol Kumata, Kathleen Schneider, and Jean Kondo Weigl. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. . . . **METRO PICTURES**, 150 Greene St.: Recent works by half a dozen artists. Allan McCollum's far outnumber the others, with four hundred and sixty-odd "Surrogate" paintings, which are black rectangles enamelled on molded hydrostone, looking as if they were neatly matted and framed. Through Saturday, Jan. 18.

SCULPTURE—Bryan Hunt, Joel Shapiro, and Tom Otterness are among the seven artists exhibiting new works. Through Feb. 8. (Shafrazi, 163 Mercer St.)

OTHER GALLERIES

DIKE BLAIR—Gouache paintings. Through Feb. 2. (Christminster, 336 E. 5th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

LORENZO BONECHI—Three large paintings, including a Crucifixion, by a young Italian. The figures are quite attenuated. Through Feb. 2. (Sharpe, 175 Avenue B, at 11th St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at 1.)

COLETTE—Paintings, sculptures, and photographs, new work and old. Through Feb. 1. (Newburg, 44 White St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Saturdays.)

DENISE GREEN—A two-gallery exhibit of paintings. New works at M-13, at 413 E. 9th St. Through Feb. 2. (Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . Paintings dating from 1976 to 1985 and drawings at Viafora, 568 Broadway. Through Feb. 12.

PHILIP TAAFFE—Large paintings of rippling Op Art and several reminiscent of Pattern painting by an artist who collages his own linoleum or silk-screen prints onto huge sheets of paper and works them over with acrylics. Through Feb. 2. (Hearn, 735 E. 9th St., just west of Avenue D. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

CHUCK CLOSE / EMMET GOWIN—Photographic studies for some of his large-scale paintings. / New photographs of Mt. St. Helens and the ancient city of Petra, in Jordan. Through Feb. 15. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

PETER HUJAR—Photographs of people, animals, and places, many of the latter in urban slums. Through Jan. 26. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, 167 Avenue A, at 10th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . Also showing, simultaneously, are collages and constructions by Al Hansen, one using cigarette butts and paper matches, and ninety-eight papier-mâché masks by Lisa Cieslik.

ANDRÉ KERTÉZ (1894-1985)—Approximately a hundred and sixty prints of Paris and New York are on view at the Metropolitan Museum. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

FRANK MAJORE—A three-gallery exhibit of prints. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Through Feb. 16. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6. . . . 303 Gallery, 303 Park Ave. S., at 23rd St. Through Feb. 8. Opens at 1. . . . Nature Morte, 204 E. 10th St. Through Jan. 26. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

JOHN REUTER AND STEPHEN JOHN PHILLIPS—Photo-

graphs of nudes. Through Feb. 7. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway.)

AUGUST SANDER (1876-1964) / PETER ARCHER—Photographs, chiefly landscapes and architecture but with a few prints from the "Men of the Twentieth Century" series. / Landscape drawings in charcoal. Through Feb. 1. (Sander, 51 Greene St.)

KENNETH SNELSON—Panoramic photographs of Paris. Through Feb. 15. (Zabriske, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A gilded French rococo carriage, decorated with paintings from the studio of Boucher, and Rubens' monumental painting "The Assumption of the Virgin" set the tone of an elaborate show of art works acquired or commissioned by the Princes of Liechtenstein between the sixteenth century and the nineteenth. Ornate firearms in the collection occupy one gallery. . . . "Costumes of Royal India," an extravaganza evoking palaces of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when the garments on view were worn by rajas, maharajas, ranis, maharanis, nizams, and nawabs. Also, accessories, furnishings, and portraits. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY**: Prints by André Kertész. Through Feb. 23. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—An exhibit of lithographs and posters, mainly, by Toulouse-Lautrec, all from his last ten years. Through Jan. 26. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY**: "Variants," a selection of black-and-white prints by Americans and Europeans. Through March 11. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A show of about a hundred and twenty sculptures representing the different styles used by American and European artists since the forties, and singling out the contributions of Giacometti, David Smith, and Cornell. Through Feb. 16. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.) . . . Performance at the museum: Hanne Tierney will use life-size marionettes to enact Maurice Maeterlinck's "The Intruder," Friday and Saturday, Jan. 17-18, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 19, at 3. Tickets will be available at the door.

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—An exhibit that examines American decorative and industrial design in this century, with examples extending from a Frank Lloyd Wright dining set to an Apple IIc personal computer. Through Feb. 16. . . . A Ralston Crawford (1906-78) retrospective of paintings, drawings, photographs, and lithographs. Through Feb. 2. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—The Festival of India will bring a comprehensive survey of terra-cotta objects, one of whose char-

acteristics is that they bear a striking family resemblance to one another, whether they were produced in 2500 B.C. or in the twentieth century. The more than a hundred and thirty pieces include cult figurines, animals, and toys. Starts Friday, Jan. 17. (Open daily except Tuesdays. Hours: Mondays, except Jan. 20, and Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6; Monday, Jan. 20, from 1 to 5.)

FRICK COLLECTION, 1 E. 70th St.—A show concerning the Ingres portrait of Comtesse d'Haussonville painted between 1842 and 1845. With the work as its focal point, the exhibit examines and documents everything from the porcelains seen in the portrait to memorabilia of the Comtesse to the artist's preparatory studies. Through Feb. 16. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MORGAN LIBRARY, 29 E. 36th St.—"The Golden Age of British Photography, 1839-1900," an exhibit of more than two hundred photographs from the Victoria & Albert Museum. Through Feb. 2. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Stuart Davis's New York," an exhibit of paintings (including a mural), drawings, and prints centered on Manhattan's landscape, which inspired so many of his works. Through March 16. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

FRANKLIN FURNACE, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671—Jerri Allyn, Bill Gordh, Joe Lowery, and Debra Wanner (performance), Thursdays through Saturdays, Jan. 16-18 and Jan. 23-25, at 8:30.

THE KITCHEN, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793—Music performance: Aksak Maboul and Zazou-Bikaye, Thursday, Jan. 16, at 8; Jayne Bliss & Beautifier and Minimal Compact, Friday, Jan. 17, at 8; Frank Chickens and Zazou-Bikaye, Saturday, Jan. 18, at 8; a concert of compositions by György Ligeti, performed by various musicians, Sunday, Jan. 19, at 3; Malcolm Goldstein and Archie Shepp, Friday, Jan. 24, at 8; Metropolitan Blues All-Stars and Olu Dara and the Okra Orchestra, Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8.

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288—Frances Becker (performance), Friday through Sunday, Jan. 17-19, at 9; Jim Neu and David Woodberry (dance performance), Friday through Sunday, Jan. 24-26, at 9.

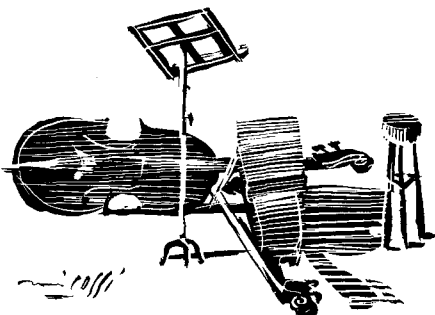
NOTE—On Monday, Jan. 20, at 8 and 10, Elliott Sharp will present his compositions at the Diane Brown Gallery, 100 Greene St. (Tickets at the door on the night of the concerts.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd St. Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 427-4410; and for Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—Wednesday, Jan. 15, at 8: "Tosca," with Montserrat Caballé, Luciano Pavarotti, and Cornell MacNeil; conducted by Carlo Felice Cillario. . . . Thursday, Jan. 16, at 7: "Lohengrin," with Eva Marton, Leonie Rysanek, Peter Hofmann, and Morley Meredith; Max Epstein. . . . Friday, Jan. 17, at 8: "Idomeneo," with Linda Zoghby, Carol Vaness, Frederica von Stade, David Rendall, and John Alexander; Jeffrey Tate. . . . Saturday, Jan. 18, at 2: "Tosca," with Montserrat Caballé, Luciano Pavarotti, and Cornell MacNeil; Carlo Felice Cillario. . . . Saturday, Jan. 18, at 8: "Roméo et Juliette," with Catherine Malfitano, Hilda Harris, Neil Shicoff, and Brian Schexnayder; Sylvain Cambreling. . . . Monday, Jan. 20, at 8: "Idomeneo," with Linda Zoghby, Carol Vaness, Frederica von Stade, David Rendall,



and John Alexander; Jeffrey Tate. . . ¶ Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 8: "Roméo et Juliette," with Catherine Malfitano, Hilda Harris, Neil Shicoff, and Brian Schexnayder; Sylvain Cambreling. . . ¶ Wednesday, Jan. 22, at 8: "Tosca," with Montserrat Caballé, Luciano Pavarotti, and Cornell MacNeil; Carlo Felice Cillario. . . ¶ Thursday, Jan. 23, at 8: "Idomeneo," with Linda Zoghby, Carol Vanness, Frederica von Stade, David Rendall, and John Alexander; Jeffrey Tate. . . ¶ Friday, Jan. 24, at 8: "Khovanshchina," with Natalia Rom, Helga Dernesch, Aage Haugland, and Martti Talvela; Neeme Järvi. . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 25, at 1:30: "Roméo et Juliette," with Catherine Malfitano, Hilda Harris, Neil Shicoff, and Brian Schexnayder; Sylvain Cambreling. . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8: "Tosca," with Montserrat Caballé, Luciano Pavarotti, and Cornell MacNeil; Carlo Felice Cillario.

MANNES CAMERATA—Final performances of two one-act French operas: "Robin and Marion," written in the thirteenth century by Adam de la Halle, and "The City of Ladies," written in the fifteenth century by Christine de Pizan. Conducted by Grand Herreid and Thomas Zajac, and staged by Paul C. Echols. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 15-16, and Saturday, Jan. 18, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 19, at 4. For information about tickets, call 580-0210, from 10 to 5.)

BRONX OPERA COMPANY—Two performances of Weber's "Der Freischütz," in English, staged by Stephen Jarrett. With the Bronx Opera Orchestra conducted by Michael Spierman. (Hunter College Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. Friday and Saturday, Jan. 17-18, at 8. For tickets, call 787-1356.)

ORCHESTRAS

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—At Avery Fisher Hall, Erich Leinsdorf conducting—Thursday, Jan. 16, at 8; Friday, Jan. 17, at 2; Saturday, Jan. 18, at 8; and Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 7:30: A Weber-Hindemith-Bruckner program (no soloists). . . ¶ Thursday, Jan. 23, at 8; Friday, Jan. 24, at 2; and Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 7:30: A Schoenberg-Stravinsky-Dvořák program (all with Walter Klien, piano).

CRACOW PHILHARMONIC—At Carnegie Hall, Krzysztof Penderecki directing this group, making its first appearance here—Saturday, Jan. 18, at 8: A program that includes two works by Penderecki, with Yo-Yo Ma, cello. . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8: A performance of Penderecki's "Polish Requiem" (New York premiere), with Mariana Nicolesco, soprano; Jadwiga Rappe, alto; Ryszard Karczykowski, tenor; Malcolm Smith, bass-baritone; and the Choral Arts Society of Washington.

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA—Riccardo Muti conducting, with Gregory Fulkerson, violin. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 8.)

NEW YORK POPS—Skitch Henderson conducting the second in a series of five concerts, this one a program of Spanish music, with Carlos Montoya, flamenco and classical guitarist. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, Jan. 17, at 8.)

SOVIET EMIGRÉ ORCHESTRA—With Lazar Gosman, violin. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. Sunday, Jan. 19, at 2. For tickets, call 586-4680.)

Y CHAMBER SYMPHONY—Raymond Leppard conducting a Saint-Saëns-Shostakovich-Haydn program, with Joseph Kalichstein, piano, and Neil Balm, trumpet. (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Saturday, Jan. 18, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 19, at 3.)

AMERICAN COMPOSERS ORCHESTRA—Charles Wuorinen conducting, with Phyllis Bryn-Julson, soprano, and Alan Feinberg, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Jan. 19, at 3.)

OPERA ORCHESTRA OF NEW YORK—Eve Queler directing a performance of Verdi's "I Lombardi" in concert form, with Aprile Millo, soprano; Carlo Bergonzi, tenor; and Paul Plishka, bass. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Jan. 19, at 8.)

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA—Lieutenant Dennis Layendecker conducting a program of twentieth-century American music, with Kim Kashkashian, viola; Jennifer Ringo, soprano; and Larry Alan Smith, composer-conductor. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 22, at 8. For information about free tickets, call 362-1911.)

BROOKLYN PHILHARMONIC—Lukas Foss directing the first in a "Meet the Moderns" series of

four programs, this one with Michael Barrett, piano; David Jaffe, mandolin; and the Long Island Symphonic Choral Association. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Friday, Jan. 24, at 8. For information about tickets, call 254-6374. . . ¶ Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8.)

RECITALS

MENDELSSOHN STRING QUARTET—The first of two concerts. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, Jan. 16, at 8.)

BERT LUCARELLI—Oboe, with Ida Kavañan, violin; Thomas Hryniv, piano; the Manhattan String Quartet; and the Lehigh Valley Chamber Orchestra conducted by Donald Spieth. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, Jan. 16, at 8.)

DAVID BURGESS—Classical guitarist. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Thursday, Jan. 16, at 8.)

WAYERLY CONSORT—The second in a series of four programs, this one devoted primarily to the music of the sixteenth-century composer Orlando de Lassus. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, Jan. 16, and Saturday, Jan. 18, at 8.)

GALIMIR STRING QUARTET—Chamber music. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. Friday, Jan. 17, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

GARY WILLIAM FRIEDMAN—Mr. Friedman conducting a chamber ensemble in a program of his own music, with Joanna Simon, mezzo-soprano; Charles Pailthorpe, baritone; Brooks Tillotson, horn; Marc Goldberg, bassoon; and Robert King, clarinet. (Vineyard Theatre, 309 E. 26th St. 683-0696. Saturday, Jan. 18, at 8. There will be a post-concert reception, at which audience members may meet the composer.)

YEHUDI MENUHIN—Violin, with Jeremy Menuhin, piano, and others. (Avery Fisher Hall. Sunday, Jan. 19, at 3.)

ENGLISH CONCERT—Trevor Pinnock conducting and playing the harpsichord for two programs, each with Simon Standage and Micaela Comberti, violin, and David Reichenberg, oboe. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, Jan. 19, at 3. . . ¶ Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 8, also with Jaap ter Linden, cello.)

MANHATTAN VOCAL ENSEMBLE—Nelly Vuksic directing a program of music from the colonial period of Latin America, with César Vuksic, keyboard. (Center for Inter-American Relations, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. Sunday, Jan. 19, at 3. For information about tickets, call 249-8950.)

ZAIDEE PARKINSON—Piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, Jan. 19, at 3.)

BOWDOIN TRIO—The second in a series of three concerts presenting Brahms' complete piano chamber music, this one with Paul Doktor, viola, and David Jolley, horn. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Sunday, Jan. 19, at 8:30.)

STEVE REICH AND MUSICIANS—George Manahan conducting an all-Reich program, with Richard Stoltzman, clarinet. (Avery Fisher Hall. Monday, Jan. 20, at 8.)

ELEANOR LAWRENCE—Flute, with David Gilbert conducting a chamber orchestra, and Deborah Hoffman, harp. (Alice Tully Hall. Monday, Jan. 20, at 8.)

NORTH/SOUTH CONSONANCE—Max Lifchitz conducting an ensemble and guest artists, including Rosalind Rees, soprano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Monday, Jan. 20, at 8.)

SARAH GRUNSTEIN—Piano, in the first of two concerts presenting Bach's "The Well-Tempered Clavier." (Merkin Concert Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 7:30.)

DANIEL MCKELWAY—Clarinet, with Joseph Kalichstein, piano, and Fred Sherry, cello. (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 8.)

BOWERY ENSEMBLE—Chamber music. (Great Hall,

Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 8. For information about tickets, call 406-2915.)

ALEXANDER TORADZE—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 22, at 8.)

ARLEEN AUGÉR—Soprano, with assisting artists. (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 22, at 8.)

GOLIARD CHAMBER SOLOISTS—A program of vocal and instrumental music. (Merkin Concert Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 22, at 8.)

POMERIUM MUSICS—Alexander Blachley conducting, with Julianne Baird, Ann Monoyios, and Johanna Arnold, all sopranos; Drew Minter, countertenor; and others. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Thursday, Jan. 23, at 8.)

CLASSICAL QUARTET—The first of two Haydn-Mozart programs. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Thursday, Jan. 23, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

NEW MUSIC CONSORT—With Jan Opalach, bass, and Ursula Oppens and Martin Goldray, piano. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, 120 Claremont Ave., at 122nd St. Thursday, Jan. 23, at 8. For information about tickets, call 749-2802, Ext. 520.)

PAUL ESSWOOD—Countertenor, with John Constable, harpsichord. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Friday, Jan. 24, at 8.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is 564-4400.)

PROFESSIONAL BASKETBALL—At MADISON SQUARE GARDEN: Knicks vs. Golden State, Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 7:30. . . ¶ Knicks vs. Milwaukee, Saturday, Jan. 25, at 7:30. . . ¶ BYRNE MEADOWLANDS ARENA (1-201 935-8888): Nets vs. Denver, Saturday, Jan. 18, at 7:30.

HOCKEY—At MADISON SQUARE GARDEN: Rangers vs. Hartford Whalers, Monday, Jan. 20, at 7:35. . . ¶ Rangers vs. Quebec Nordiques, Thursday, Jan. 23, at 7:35. . . ¶ NASSAU COLISEUM: Islanders vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 8:05. . . ¶ Islanders vs. Chicago Black Hawks, Saturday, Jan. 25, at 7:05. (Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I. 1-516 794-9100.) . . ¶ BYRNE MEADOWLANDS ARENA (1-201 935-3900): Devils vs. Washington Capitals, Friday, Jan. 17, at 7:35. . . ¶ Devils vs. Buffalo Sabres, Sunday, Jan. 19, at 5:05.

RACING—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30. The Affectionately Handicap, Saturday, Jan. 18, and the Assault Handicap, Saturday, Jan. 25.

TENNIS—Nabisco Masters: John McEnroe, Ivan Lendl, Boris Becker, Jimmy Connors, and others. (Madison Square Garden. Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 15-16, at 4; Friday, Jan. 17, at 1 and 7; Saturday, Jan. 18 [semifinals], at 12:30; and Sunday, Jan. 19 [finals], at 12:30.)

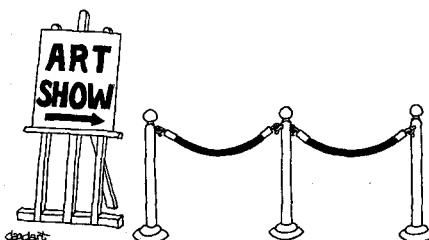
ET ALIA

POETRY AND PROSE READINGS—Raymond Carver, Harold Brodkey, Jayne Anne Phillips, Bernard Malamud, and others reading from their own fiction. (Casino on the Park, Essex House, 160 Central Park S. Thursday, Jan. 16, at 9. No tickets necessary.) . . ¶ Charles Simic and Rosanna Warren reading from their own poetry. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, Jan. 20, at 8.)

NATIONAL BOAT SHOW—The seventy-sixth annual display of inboards, outboards, sailboats, paddleboats, cruisers, dinghies, and everything that goes with them. (Coliseum, Columbus Circle. Wednesday through Friday, Jan. 15-17, from noon to 10; Saturday, Jan. 18, from 10 to 10; and Sunday, Jan. 19, from 11 to 7.)

CAT SHOW—International Cat Show, presented by the Garden Cat Club. (Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Friday, Jan. 24, from 2 to 9, and Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 25-26, from 10 to 7.)

AUCTIONS—At Sotheby's, York Ave. at 72nd St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9:30 to 5.)—Thursday, Jan. 16, at 10:15 and 2: Old Master drawings. . . ¶ Friday, Jan. 17, at 2: Old Master paintings.



GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

EAST SIDE

LITTLE THEATRE, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
"Je Tu Il Elle" (1974; directed by Chantal Akerman; in French).

NEW GRAMERCY, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"The Jewel of the Nile" (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

BAY CINEMA, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
Through Jan. 16: "Head Office" (Ken Finkleman), with Judge Reinhold.
From Jan. 17: "Murphy's Romance" (Martin Ritt), with Sally Field and James Garner.

MURRAY HILL, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
"Black Moon Rising" (Harley Cokliss), with Tommy Lee Jones.

LOEWS 34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Rocky IV" (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.

Theatre 2: "A Chorus Line" (Richard Attenborough).

Theatre 3: "Young Sherlock Holmes" (Barry Levinson), with Nicholas Rowe and Alan Cox.

34TH ST. EAST, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"White Nights" (†).

EASTSIDE CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through Jan. 16: "101 Dalmatians" (†).
From Jan. 17: "The Journey of Natty Gann" (Jeremy Kagan), with Meredith Salenger and John Cusack.

SUTTON, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"The Jewel of the Nile" (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

GOTHAM CINEMA, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Runaway Train" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and Rebecca DeMornay.

PLAZA, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Fool for Love" (Robert Altman), with Sam Shepard, Kim Basinger, Randy Quaid, and Harry Dean Stanton.

MANHATTAN 1 AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 16: "Revolution" (†). From Jan. 17: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "Black Moon Rising" (Harley Cokliss), with Tommy Lee Jones.

BARONET AND CORONET, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 16: "Clue" (Jonathan Lynn; ending A). From Jan. 17: "Murphy's Romance" (Martin Ritt), with Sally Field and James Garner.
Theatre 2: "White Nights" (†).

D. W. GRIFFITH, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).

CINEMA 1 AND II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Ran" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Trip to Bountiful" (†).

GEMINI 1 AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 16: "Twice in a Lifetime" (†). From Jan. 17: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 16: "Head Office" (Ken Finkleman), with Judge Reinhold. From Jan. 17: "Iron Eagle" (Sidney J. Furie), with Louis Gossett, Jr., and Jason Gedrick.

BEEKMAN, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"The Color Purple" (†).

LOEWS NEW YORK TWIN 1 AND 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 16: "Brazil" (Terry Gilliam), with Jonathan Pryce. From Jan. 17: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 16: "A Chorus Line" (Richard Attenborough). From Jan. 17: "The Clan of the Cave Bear" (Michael Chapman), with Daryl Hannah.

68TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Gods Must Be Crazy" (1979; Jamie Uys).

LOEWS TOWER EAST, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Out of Africa" (†).

U. A. EAST, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through Jan. 16: "Enemy Mine" (Wolfgang

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 15.

Petersen), with Dennis Quaid and Louis Gossett, Jr.
From Jan. 17: "Troll" (John Buechler), with Noah Hathaway.

LOEWS ORPHEUM 1 AND 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)

Theatre 1: "Rocky IV" (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.

Theatre 2: "Young Sherlock Holmes" (Barry Levinson), with Nicholas Rowe and Alan Cox.

86TH ST. EAST, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

"The Jewel of the Nile" (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

R.K.O. CENTURY 86TH ST. TWIN, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)

Theatre 1: Through Jan. 16: "Head Office" (Ken Finkleman), with Judge Reinhold. From Jan. 17: To be announced.

Theatre 2: Through Jan. 16: "Spies Like Us" (John Landis), with Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd. From Jan. 17: "Iron Eagle" (Sidney J. Furie), with Louis Gossett, Jr., and Jason Gedrick.

WEST SIDE

FILM FORUM 1 AND 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Theatre 1: "Following the Führer" (directed by Erwin Leiser; in German).

Theatre 2: Through Jan. 23: "Prizzi's Honor" (†). From Jan. 24: "Return" (Andrew Silver).

BLEECKER ST. CINEMA 1 AND 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)

Theatre 1: "Ufoia" (1981; John Binder), with Cindy Williams, Harry Dean Stanton, and Fred Ward.

Theatre 2: "28 Up" (1984; Michael Apted), a documentary.

WAYERLY 1 AND 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: "Runaway Train" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and Rebecca DeMornay.

Theatre 2: Through Jan. 16: "Enemy Mine" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Dennis Quaid and Louis Gossett, Jr. From Jan. 17: To be announced.

8TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

The New York Gay Film Festival.

R.K.O. ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)

Theatre 1: "The Color Purple" (†).

Theatre 2: "Out of Africa" (†).

QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: "When Father Was Away on Business" (Emir Kusturica; in Yugoslav).

Theatre 2: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).

Theatre 3: "Jagged Edge" (†).

Theatre 4: "Sotto, Sotto" (Lina Wertmüller; in Italian).

23RD ST. WEST TRIPLEX, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: Through Jan. 16: "101 Dalmatians" (†). From Jan. 17: "The Journey of Natty Gann" (Jeremy Kagan), with Meredith Salenger and John Cusack.

Theatre 2: Through Jan. 16: "Head Office" (Ken Finkleman), with Judge Reinhold. From Jan. 17: "Iron Eagle" (Sidney J. Furie), with Louis Gossett, Jr., and Jason Gedrick.

Theatre 3: Through Jan. 16: "Clue" (Jonathan Lynn; ending B). From Jan. 17: To be announced.

GUILD, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

Through Jan. 16: "101 Dalmatians" (†).

From Jan. 17: "A Chorus Line" (Richard Attenborough).

ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"White Nights" (†).

FESTIVAL, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)

Through Jan. 16: "Jagged Edge" (†).

From Jan. 17: "Sweet Dreams" (†).

57TH ST. PLAYHOUSE, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

Through Jan. 23: "Prizzi's Honor" (†).

From Jan. 24: "Always" (Henry Jaglom).

NEW CARNEGIE, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

Through Jan. 16: "Runaway Train" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and Rebecca DeMornay.

From Jan. 17: "Murphy's Romance" (Martin Ritt), with Sally Field and James Garner.

PARIS, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)

"The Official Story" (Luis Puenzo; in Spanish), with Norma Aleandro.

CINEMA 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

"The Color Purple" (†).

LOEWS PARAMOUNT, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

"A Chorus Line" (Richard Attenborough).

LINCOLN PLAZA 1, 2, AND 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: "Sugarbaby" (Percy Adlon; in German).

Theatre 2: "When Father Was Away on Business" (Emir Kusturica; in Yugoslav).

Theatre 3: "Twice in a Lifetime" (†).

CINEMA STUDIO 1 AND 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)

Theatre 1: "Shoah" (†). Part I will be shown daily.

Theatre 2: "Shoah" (†). Part II will be shown daily.

EMBASSY 72ND ST. 1 AND 2, B'way and 72nd. (724-6745)

Theatre 1: "The Mystery of Alexina" (Rene Feret; in French).

Theatre 2: Through Jan. 21: "Sharma and Beyond" (Brian Gilbert). From Jan. 22: "Those Glory, Glory Days" (Philip Saville).

LOEWS 84TH STREET SIXPLEX, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: "Rocky IV" (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.

Theatre 2: "Young Sherlock Holmes" (Barry Levinson), with Nicholas Rowe and Alan Cox.

Theatre 3: "Brazil" (Terry Gilliam), with Jonathan Pryce.

Theatre 4: "The Color Purple" (†).

Theatre 5: "Out of Africa" (†).

Theatre 6: "The Jewel of the Nile" (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

OLYMPIA QUAD, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: Through Jan. 16: (Matinées only) "101 Dalmatians" (†) and (evenings only) "Head Office" (Ken Finkleman), with Judge Reinhold. From Jan. 17: "The Journey of Natty Gann" (Jeremy Kagan), with Meredith Salenger and John Cusack.

Theatre 2: Through Jan. 16: "Black Moon Rising" (Harley Cokliss), with Tommy Lee Jones. Jan. 17-23: (Matinées only) "The Adventures of Mark Twain" (Will Vinton); and (evenings only) "Black Moon Rising." From Jan. 24: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).

Theatre 3: "Runaway Train" (Andrei Kon-

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

chalovsky), with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and Rebecca DeMornay.

Theatre 4: Through Jan. 16: "Back to the Future" (†). From Jan. 17: "Iron Eagle" (Sidney J. Furie, with Louis Gossett, Jr., and Jason Gedrick.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

CRITERION THEATRES, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "The Color Purple" (†).

Theatre 2: "Black Moon Rising" (directed by Harley Cokliss), with Tommy Lee Jones.

Theatre 3: "Back to the Future" (†).

Theatre 4: "Commando" (Mark Lester), with Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Theatre 5: "Krush Groove" (Michael Schultz).

Theatre 6: Through Jan. 16: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder). From Jan. 17: (Matinées only) "The Adventures of Mark Twain" (Will Vinton); and (evenings only) "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge."

EMBASSY 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)

Through Jan. 16: "Runaway Train" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and Rebecca DeMornay.

From Jan. 17: "The Journey of Natty Gann" (Jeremy Kagan), with Meredith Salenger and John Cusack.

EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, B'way and 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: Through Jan. 16: "Clue" (Jonathan Lynn; ending A). From Jan. 17: "Runaway Train" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and Rebecca DeMornay.

Theatre 3: Through Jan. 16: "Clue" (ending B). From Jan. 17: "Clue" (ending A).

Theatre 4: "Clue" (ending C).

LOEWS ASTOR PLAZA, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)

"Young Sherlock Holmes" (Barry Levinson), with Nicholas Rowe and Alan Cox.

LOEWS STATE 1 AND 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)

Theatre 1: "Rocky IV" (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.

Theatre 2: "Out of Africa" (†).

MOVIELAND, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)

"Enemy Mine" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Dennis Quaid and Louis Gossett, Jr.

NEW EMBASSY 49TH STREET, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003)

"101 Dalmatians" (†).

R.K.O. CENTURY NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: Through Jan. 16: "Revolution" (†). From Jan. 17: "Iron Eagle" (Sidney J. Furie, with Louis Gossett, Jr., and Jason Gedrick.

Theatre 2: "Spies Like Us" (John Landis), with Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd.

R.K.O. CENTURY WARNER TWIN, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)

Theatre 1: Through Jan. 16: "The Annihilators." From Jan. 17: "Pray for Death" (Gordon Hessler), with Sho Kosugi.

Theatre 2: "The Jewel of the Nile" (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

U. A. TWIN 1 AND 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)

Theatre 1: Through Jan. 16: "Head Office" (Ken Finkleman), with Judge Reinhold. From Jan. 17: "Troll" (John Buechler), with Noah Hathaway.

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Theatre 2: Through Jan. 16: "The Alchemist." From Jan. 17: To be announced.

REVIVAL HOUSES

CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through Jan. 16: "Blow-Up" (1966; directed by Michelangelo Antonioni), with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings; and "The Passenger" (1975; Michelangelo Antonioni), with Jack Nicholson and Maria Schneider.

Jan. 17-18: "Sophie's Choice" (1982; Alan J. Pakula), with Meryl Streep, Kevin Kline, and Peter MacNicol; and "The World According to Garp" (1982; George Roy Hill), with Robin Williams, Glenn Close, Mary Beth Hurt, and John Lithgow.

Jan. 19: "Bus Stop" (1956; George Axelrod), with Marilyn Monroe, Don Murray, Arthur O'Connell, Betty Field, and Eileen Heckart; and "The Seven Year Itch" (1955; Billy Wilder), with Marilyn Monroe, Tom Ewell, Victor Moore, Evelyn Keyes, and Sonny Tufts.

Jan. 20-21: "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (1953; Howard Hawks), with Jane Russell and Marilyn Monroe; and "How to Marry a Millionaire" (1953; Jean Negulesco), with Marilyn Monroe, Betty Grable, and Lauren Bacall.

Jan. 22-23: "Lady Chatterley's Lover" (1959; Marc Allégret; in French), with Danielle Darrieux; and "Women in Love" (†).

Jan. 24-25: "A Clockwork Orange" (1971; Stanley Kubrick), with Malcolm McDowell, Patrick Magee, and Adrienne Corri; and "Blade Runner" (1982; Ridley Scott), with Harrison Ford and Rutger Hauer.

METRO CINEMA, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Through Jan. 19: "Chushingura" (1966; Hiroshi Inagaki; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.

Jan. 20-21: "The Ballad of Narayama" (1983) and "Vengeance Is Mine" (1979), both films in Japanese, directed by Shohei Imamura.

Jan. 22: "Floating Clouds" (1955; Mikio Naruse; in Japanese), with Hideko Takamine; and "The End of Summer" (†).

Jan. 23: "Ohayo" (1958) and "I Was Born, But..." (1932), both films in Japanese, directed by Yasujiro Ozu.

Jan. 24-25: "Yojimbo" (1961; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune; and "Rashomon" (1951; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune, Machiko Kyo, Masayuki Mori, and Takashi Shimura.

REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Jan. 15: "Star!" (1968; Robert Wise), with Julie Andrews.

Jan. 16-18: "To Have and Have Not" (1944; Howard Hawks), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Walter Brennan; and "Notorious" (1946; Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Ingrid Bergman, Claude Rains, and Louis Calhern.

Jan. 19-20: "The King and I" (1956; Walter Lang), with Deborah Kerr and Yul Brynner; and "Anastasia" (1956; Anatole Litvak), with Ingrid Bergman, Yul Brynner, and Helen Hayes.

Jan. 21-22: "Margie" (1946; Henry King), with Jeanne Crain, Glenn Langan, and Alan Young; and "Good News" (1947; Charles Walters), with June Allyson, Peter Lawford, Mel Tormé, and Joan McCracken.

Jan. 23-25: "Laura" (1944; Otto Preminger), with Gene Tierney, Clifton Webb, Vincent Price, Dana Andrews, and Judith Anderson; and "Dial M for Murder" (1954; Alfred Hitchcock), with Ray Milland, Grace Kelly, Robert Cummings, Anthony Dawson, and John Williams.

THALIA, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

Jan. 15: "Tempest" (1982; Paul Mazursky), with John Cassavetes, Gena Rowlands, Susan Sarandon, Raul Julia, and Molly Ringwald; and "The Tempest" (1960).

Jan. 16: "Chilly Scenes of Winter" ("Head Over Heels"; 1979; Joan Micklin Silver), with John Heard and Mary Beth Hurt; and "Baby, It's You" (1983; John Sayles), with Rosanna Arquette and Vincent Spano.

Jan. 17: "Blow-Up" (1966; Michelangelo Antonioni), with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings; and "Zabriskie Point" (1970; Michelangelo Antonioni), with Mark Frechette, Daria Halprin, and Rod Taylor.

Jan. 18: "Lola" (1982; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German); and "Lili Marleen" (1981; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Hanna Schygulla and Giancarlo Giannini.

Jan. 19: "The Woman Next Door" (1981; François Truffaut; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Fanny Ardant; and "The Last Metro" (1981; François Truffaut; in French), with Catherine Deneuve, Gérard Depardieu, and Jean Poiret.

Jan. 20: "Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid" (†); and "Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia" (1974; Sam Peckinpah), with Warren Oates.

Jan. 21: "Interiors" (†) and "Hour of the Wolf" (†).

Jan. 22: "Richard III" (1956; Laurence Olivier), with Olivier, Claire Bloom, Ralph Richardson, John Gielgud, and Cedric Hardwicke.

Jan. 23: "The Fearless Vampire Killers" (†); and "Phantom of the Paradise" (1974; Brian De Palma), with Paul Williams, William Finley, Jessica Harper, and Gerrit Graham.

Jan. 24: "A Fistful of Dollars" (1967) and "For a Few Dollars More" (1967), both films directed by Sergio Leone, with Clint Eastwood.

Jan. 25: "2001: A Space Odyssey" (1968; Stanley Kubrick), with Keir Dullea and Gary Lockwood.

THALIA SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

Jan. 15: "Testament of Orpheus" (1962; Jean Cocteau; in French); and "Disobediant" (1953).

Jan. 16: "The Bonnie Parker Story" (1958; William Witney), with Dorothy Provine; and "Machine Gun Kelly" (1958; Roger Corman), with Charles Bronson.

Jan. 17-18: "The Harder They Come" (1973; Perry Henzell; a Jamaican film, in Jamaican patois), with Jimmy Cliff; and "Land of Look Behind" (1982; Alan Greenberg), with Gregory Isaacs.

Jan. 19: "Blackmail" (†) and "Murder" (†).

Jan. 20: "Reds" (1981; Warren Beatty), with Beatty, Diane Keaton, Jack Nicholson, and Maureen Stapleton.

Jan. 21: "Atlantic City" (†) and "Pretty Baby" (†).

Jan. 22: "The Two of Us" (†) and "Mon Oncle" (†).

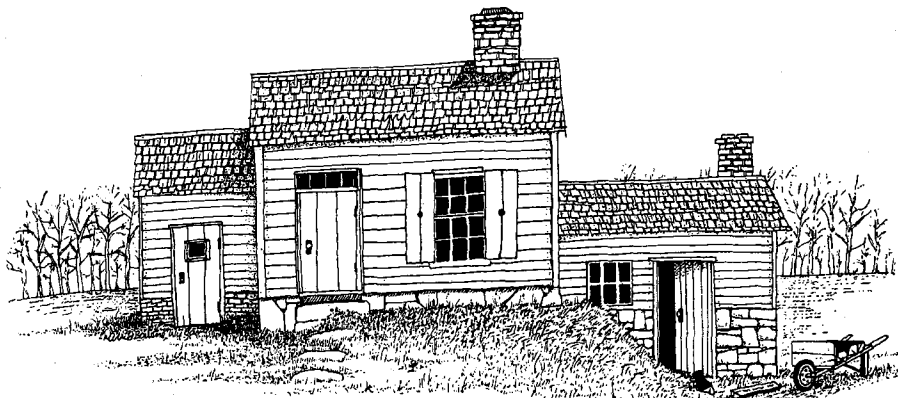
Jan. 23: "Shake, Rattle, and Rock" (1956; Edward L. Cahn), with Fats Domino; and "Rock All Night" (†).

Jan. 24-25: "Get Out Your Handkerchiefs" (†); and "The Marquise of O..." (1976; Eric Rohmer; in German), with Edith Clever and Bruno Ganz.

THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Jan. 15: "Red-Headed Woman" (1932; Jack Conway), with Jean Harlow, Chester Morris, and Charles Boyer; and "Personal Property" (1937; W. S. Van Dyke), with Jean Harlow, Robert Taylor, and Una O'Connor.

Jan. 16: "The Man Who Never Was" (1956;



- Ronald Neame), with Clifton Webb, Gloria Grahame, Robert Fleming, and Josephine Griffin; and "The Spy Who Came in from the Cold" (1965; Martin Ritt), with Richard Burton, Claire Bloom, and Oskar Werner.
- Jan. 17-18: "The Women" (1939; George Cukor), with Norma Shearer, Rosalind Russell, Joan Crawford, and Paulette Goddard; and "Dinner at Eight" (1933; George Cukor), with Jean Harlow, Marie Dressler, and John Barrymore.
- Jan. 19: "A Slight Case of Murder" (†) and "Arsenic and Old Lace" (†).
- Jan. 20: "Los Olvidados" ("The Young and the Damned;" 1950; Luis Buñuel; in Spanish); and "Viridiana" (1961; Luis Buñuel; in Spanish), with Francisco Rabal and Silvia Pinal.
- Jan. 21: "In a Lonely Place" (1950; Nicholas Ray), with Humphrey Bogart and Gloria Grahame; and "Dead Reckoning" (†).
- Jan. 22: "Pygmalion" (†) and "Major Barbara" (†).
- Jan. 23: "Queen Christina" (1934; Rouben Mamoulian), with Greta Garbo and John Gilbert; and "As You Desire Me" (1932; George Fitzmaurice), with Greta Garbo and Mervyn Douglas.
- Jan. 24-25: "Young and Innocent" (†) and "Murder" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490); a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing).

THEATRE 1: Jan. 16 at 2:30: "The Divorce of

Lady X" (1938; directed by Tim Whelan), with Merle Oberon, Laurence Olivier, Binnie Barnes, and Ralph Richardson. . . .
 Jan. 16 at 6: "Oh, Mr. Porter!" (1937; Marcel Varnel), with Will Hay. . . .
 Jan. 17 at 2:30: "Champagne Charlie" (1944; Alberto Cavalcanti), with Tommy Trinder and Stanley Holloway. . . .
 Jan. 17 at 6: "The Divorce of Lady X." . . .
 Jan. 18 at 12:30: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons. . . .
 Jan. 18 at 2: "Vice Versa" (1948; Peter Ustinov), with Roger Livesey, Kay Walsh, Anthony Newley, Petula Clark, and James Robertson Justice. . . .
 Jan. 18 at 5: "Champagne Charlie." . . .
 Jan. 19 at 12:30: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons. . . .
 Jan. 19 at 2: "Miranda" (1948; Ken Annakin), with Googie Withers and Glynis Johns. . . .
 Jan. 19 at 5: "Maytime in Mayfair" (1949; Herbert Wilcox), with Anna Neagle, Michael Wilding, and Tom Walls. . . .
 Jan. 20 at 2:30: "Vice Versa." . . .
 Jan. 20 at 6: "Love Me Tonight" (1932; Rouben Mamoulian), with Maurice Chevalier, Jeanette MacDonald, and Myrna Loy. Mr. Mamoulian will be present. . . .
 Jan. 21 at 2:30: "Maytime in Mayfair." . . .
 Jan. 21 at 6: "Miranda." . . .
 Jan. 23 at 2:30: "The Happiest Days of Your Life" (1950; Frank Launder), with Alastair Sim, Margaret Rutherford, and Joyce Grenfell. . . .
 Jan. 23 at 6: "The Belles of St. Trinians" (1954; Frank Launder), with Alastair Sim, Joyce Grenfell, and George Cole. . . .
 Jan. 24 at 2:30: "Laughter in Paradise" (1951; Mario Zampi), with Alastair Sim, Fay Compton, George Cole, and Joyce Grenfell. . . .
 Jan. 24 at 6: "The Card" (1952; Ronald Neame), with Alec Guinness, Glynis Johns, Valerie Hobson, and Petula Clark. . . .

Jan. 25 at 12:30: Another program of Warner Brothers cartoons. . . .
 Jan. 25 at 2:30: "The Belles of St. Trinians." . . .
 Jan. 25 at 5: "The Happiest Days of Your Life."

THEATRE 2: Jan. 16 at 12:30: A program of award-winning Japanese television commercials. . . .
 Jan. 16 at 3 and 6:30: "In the Name of the People" (1984; Alex Drechsler and Frank Christopher), a documentary. . . .
 Jan. 17 at 3: A program of animated Japanese films by Yoji Kuri. . . .
 Jan. 17 at 6:30: A program of recent animated Japanese films. . . .
 Jan. 18 at 2:30: A program of animated Japanese films by Kihachiro Kawamoto. . . .
 Jan. 18 at 5:30: A program of recent animated Japanese films. . . .
 Jan. 19 at 2:30: A program of animated Japanese films by Osamu Tezuka. . . .
 Jan. 19 at 5:30: A program of recent animated Japanese films. . . .
 Jan. 21 at 3 and 6:30 and Jan. 23 at 1: A second program of animated Japanese films. . . .
 Jan. 23 at 3 and 6:30: "Erika: Not in Vain, a Portrait" (1984; Barry Spinello), a documentary. . . .
 Jan. 24 at 3: "Face to Face" (1984; Adoor Gopalakrishnan; in Malayalam, with English subtitles). . . .
 Jan. 24 at 6:30 and Jan. 25 at 2: "Summons for Mohan Joshi" (1984; Saeed Akhtar Mirza; in Hindi, with English subtitles). . . .
 Jan. 25 at 5:30: "Face to Face."

WHITNEY MUSEUM, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Jan. 15-18 at noon and Jan. 19 at 1: "Four Women" (1978; Julie Dash), "Water Ritual #1: An Urban Rite of Purification" (1980; Barbara McCullough), "A Different Image" (1982; Alile Sharon Larkin), and "Illusions" (1982; Julie Dash). Closed Mondays.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

ARSENIC AND OLD LACE (1944)—The sane theatre-critic hero, Cary Grant, tries to convince his sweetly lethal little aunts (Josephine Hull and Jean Adair) that it isn't nice to put arsenic in the elderberry wine that they serve their guests, but they just don't understand why he gets so upset. You may not, either; the director, Frank Capra, has Grant performing in such a frenzied, dithering manner that during much of the action he seems crazier than anybody else. The villains—murderers who are less couth in their methods than the innocently mad aunts—are Peter Lorre, as himself, and Raymond Massey, impersonating Boris Karloff. With James Gleason, Edward Everett Horton, and Jack Carson. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 19.)

ATLANTIC CITY (1981)—This spa that became a racketeers' paradise during Prohibition and in 1981 was on its chaotic way to becoming Vegas with a beach is an improbable place, and in this lyric farce, directed by Louis Malle, from John Guare's script, it gives a hallucinatory texture to the lives of the characters. The story is a prankish wish-fulfillment fantasy about prosperity—what it does to cities, what it can do for people. Everything goes wrong and comes out right. As an old numbers runner, Burt Lancaster gives what is probably his funniest (and finest) performance. Susan Sarandon plays an uneducated girl studying to become a croupier, and for once her googly-eyed, slightly stupefied look seems perfect. With Kate Reid, Hollis McLaren, Robert Joy, Michel Piccoli, and Robert Goulet as himself. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 21.)

BACK TO THE FUTURE—Directed by Robert Zemeckis, this piece of Pop Art Americana is a clever, generally engaging screwball comedy. Christopher Lloyd is the small-town crackpot inventor who builds a time machine, and Michael J. Fox is Marty, the seventeen-year-old high-school boy who is hurtled back thirty years to 1955, where his parents are seventeen-year-olds at the same school. The movie has the structure of a comedy classic, but it doesn't have the rambunctiousness or the maniacal edge; the thinking is cramped and conventional. With Lea Thompson and Crispin Glover. (Reviewed in our issue of 7/29/85.) (Criterion Theatres. . . .
 Olympia Quad; through Jan. 16.)

BLACKMAIL (1929)—A London-set Hitchcock silent thriller that was in part reshot and in part dubbed to make it a sound film—and an unusually imaginative and innovative one. The heroine is played by the German actress Anny Ondra. (Her voice is dubbed.) Cyril Ritchard, who didn't look very different half a century later, plays the artist who tries to rape her. Also with Sara Allgood, John Longden, and Donald Calthrop. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 19.)

THE COLOR PURPLE—The popular novel by Alice Walker is about the bonding of Southern black women in the first half of the century. It's written in a raw, cadenced dialect, and it has a joyous emotional swing to it. Steven Spielberg, who directed the movie version, appears to have taken the novel seriously—inspirational tone, pop-folk religiosity, triumph of the human spirit, and all—and been intimidated by it. This family saga, spanning more than thirty years, is the clumsiest, least confident feature he has done. He filters everything through movies and sees rural Georgia in 1909 the way a European director might. The picture is muffled—it seems to be taking place in a made-up, far-away kingdom. With Desreta Jackson as the young Celie and Whoopi Goldberg taking over the role, Danny Glover, Willard Pugh, Margaret Avery, and Oprah Winfrey. (12/30/85) (Beekman, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin. Cinema 3, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Theatres.)

DEAD RECKONING (1947)—A forgettable Bogart melodrama that was already familiar when it came out; it had been synthesized from several of his hits, with Elizabeth Scott's role processed out of Mary Astor and Lauren Bacall routines. Scott double-crosses a friend of Bogart's, and as he takes her to the authorities he snarls, "You're going to fry." "Ah," she says yearningly, flaring her nostrils, "can't we put this behind us? Don't you love me?" He sneers heavily, though you can see that deep down under he loves her. She fries. John Cromwell directed; with Morris Carnovsky, Wallace Ford, and William Prince. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 21.)

THE END OF SUMMER (1961)—This is one of Yasujiro Ozu's quiet studies of the drama in middle-class family life, and it centers on the character of an Osaka rice-wine manufac-

turer. In Japanese. (Metro Cinema; Jan. 22.)

THE FEARLESS VAMPIRE KILLERS (1967)—Directed, written by, acted in, and then disowned by Roman Polanski, who made it in Britain under the title "Dance of the Vampires." When the picture was first shown in the United States, eighteen minutes were cut. The full version is being shown here—cut dance sequences have been restored, as well as the use of Polanski's own voice, which was dubbed in the original release. The film flails, but the talent is visible somewhere. (Thalia; Jan. 23.)

GET OUT YOUR HANDKERCHIEFS (1978)—This sex comedy by the writer-director Bertrand Blier is flagrantly funny in a slangy, buoyant, unpredictable way. It's about two pals (played by Gérard Philipe and Patrick Dewaere) for whom women are like another species. Seeing this film, a woman enters a man's fantasy universe stripped of hypocrisy. With Carole Laure, Michel Serrault, and Riton. In French. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 24-25.)

HOOF OF THE WOLF (1968)—A very fine Ingmar Bergman film about the impingement of two personalities upon each other, like "Persona" and "The Silence." Max von Sydow plays an obsessed painter, and Liv Ullmann his deeply troubled wife. In Swedish. (Thalia; Jan. 21.)

101 DALMATIANS (1961)—Late Disney, but for once not vulgar. This is most delicately drawn, with beautiful graphics of Nash's London and an entrancing espionage chain of dogs barking at one another from signal points across the island, like the beacon flares before the Armada. (New Embassy 49th St. . . .
 Eastside Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Guild; through Jan. 16. . . .
 Olympia Quad; through Jan. 16, matinee performances only.)

INTERIORS (1978)—The people in this serious Woody Allen film are destroyed by the repressiveness of good taste, and so is the picture. "Interiors" looks like a masterpiece and has a super-banal metaphysical theme (death versus life). The problem for the family in the film is the towering figure of the disciplined, manipulative, inner-directed mother (Geraldine Page). She is such a perfectionist that she cannot enjoy anything, and the standards of taste and achievement that she imposes on her three daughters (Diane Keaton, Mary Beth Hurt, and Kristin Griffith) tie them in

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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such knots that they all consider themselves failures. People who watch this movie may wonder how Woody Allen can present in a measured, lugubriously straight manner the same sorts of tinny anxiety discourse that he generally parodies. And maybe they'll wish it were all a put-on. With E. G. Marshall, Maureen Stapleton, Richard Jordan, and Sam Waterston. (Thalia; Jan. 21.)

JAGGED EDGE—This thriller doesn't offer the pleasures of style, but it does the job. Jeff Bridges plays the San Francisco newspaper publisher-editor who is tried for the murder of his rich wife, who owned the paper; Peter Coyote is the D.A. prosecuting him; and Glenn Close is the radiantly blond woman lawyer who defends him, and falls in love with him. Working from a script by Joe Eszterhas that's smart, pared down, and efficient, the director, Richard Marquand, sets up the situations and delivers the payoffs; he doesn't show much in the way of imagination or devotion to craft, but he gets distinctively pungent performances. With Robert Loggia, Leigh Taylor-Young, Marshall Colt, and Karen Austin. (11/4/85) (Quad Cinema. . . . Festival; through Jan. 16.)

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN—Set in a nameless South American country, Hector Babenco's film is about a homosexual window dresser, Molina (William Hurt), and a revolutionary, Valentín (Raul Julia), who share a prison cell. Molina tries to comfort Valentín and help him forget his pain and misery by telling him the stories of old movies. Hurt is just about the only thing to look at; he's very likable in the scenes where Molina reveals his tenderness and warmth and humor. But it's a slack piece of moviemaking, and as sentimental as the forties screen romances that Molina is infatuated with. This Brazilian production, made in English, from Manuel Puig's novel, was shot in São Paulo. (8/26/85) (D. W. Griffith, and Quad Cinema. . . . Olympia Quad; starting Jan. 24.)

MAJOR BARBARA (1941)—Terrible, but bearable; there's a fascination to its clunkiness. Shaw had allowed "Pygmalion" (see below) to be cut and adapted for the screen, and it was a great success, but he got stubborn on this one and hung on to his dialogue; Gabriel Pascal, who had produced "Pygmalion," had also been spoiled by its success and decided to direct this time. Their failings were compounded; the actors posture and talk, and the movie goes on and on until whatever it's meant to be about no longer seems to matter. It's too cheerful to be really boring, however. The cast includes Rex Harrison, Wendy Hiller, Robert Morley, Sybil Thorndike, Robert Newton, Emyln Williams, Deborah Kerr, and Stanley Holloway. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 22.)

MON ONCLE (1958)—One often appreciates what Jacques Tati is trying to do more than what he actually brings off. His target is the depersonalization of modern life—the sterile, tasteless tedium that modern hygienic design has produced. There are genuinely inventive moments, but they are intermittent, and a fundamental miscasting confuses the issues: Shouldn't the unemotional, gawky, butterfingerted Tati be playing the plastics manufacturer rather than the warm, friendly uncle? In French. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 22.)

MURDER (1930)—A carefully designed early Hitchcock whodunit set among theatre people. It's more languidly paced than his mid-thirties work, and the dialogue is spoken in stage rhythms. Herbert Marshall, dryly amiable in his first talking picture, plays an eminent actor—a knight serving on a jury. Convinced of the innocence of the young actress (Norah Baring) who is on trial for murder, he tries to solve the case in order to save her life. With Miles Mander, Esmé Percy, Donald Calthrop, Edward Chapman, and Phyllis Konstam. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 19. . . . Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 24-25.)

OUT OF AFRICA—Adult, cryptic, self-conscious, and unsatisfying, it attempts to romanticize the lives of the high-strung Danish woman (played by Meryl Streep) who ran a coffee plantation in Kenya, saw herself as a patrician, and wrote under the name Isak Dinesen, and the handsome English big-game hunter Denys Finch Hatton (Robert Redford). Directed by Sydney Pollack, from a script by Kurt Luedtke, the picture squirms around trying to make these people morally acceptable to a modern audience. Streep is

animated in the early scenes, but Redford doesn't give out with anything for her to play against, and the energy goes out of her performance. The film hums a little when Klaus Maria Brandauer or Michael Kitchen or Suzanna Hamilton is on the screen; they're recognizably human. (12/30/85) (Loews Tower East, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews State.)

PAT GARRETT AND BILLY THE KID (1973)—Ambitious, erotic, peculiarly unrealized account of how Garrett (James Coburn) hunts down his best friend Billy (Kris Kristofferson), with Bob Dylan (who sings the score, written by him) appearing as a buddy of Billy's. Sam Peckinpah directed, from a screenplay by Rudolph Wurlitzer. With an amazing cast that includes Jason Robards, Katy Jurado, Rita Coolidge, Chill Wills, and Richard Jaeckel. (Thalia; Jan. 20.)

PRETTY BABY (1978)—Louis Malle's beautifully intelligent picture is set in a brothel in Storyville, New Orleans, in 1917. The notorious red-light district is about to be shut down. A jazz musician—based mainly on Jelly Roll Morton (Antonio Fargas)—is playing the piano. An exquisite little girl of twelve (Brooke Shields), first shown upstairs in the room where she was born to her prostitute mother (Susan Sarandon), has her virginity auctioned off to the rich clientele. The photographer-hero is based on the legendary E. J. Bellocq (Keith Carradine). (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 21.)

PRIZZI'S HONOR—This John Huston picture has a ripe and daring comic tone. It revels voluptuously in the murderous finagling of the members of a Brooklyn Mafia family, and rejoices in their scams. Jack Nicholson's average-guyness as Charley, the clan's enforcer, is the film's touchstone: this a baroque comedy about people who behave in ordinary ways in grotesque circumstances. Everything in this picture works with everything else—which is to say that John Huston has it all in the palm of his big, bony hand. With William Hickey, Anjelica Huston, Kathleen Turner, and John Randolph. (7/1/85) (Film Forum, and 57th St. Playhouse; through Jan. 23.)

PYGMALION (1938)—First-rate romantic comedy, and certainly the best G. B. S. picture ever done. It doesn't seem weighted down with talk, like most of the others, and though a trifle slow in spots, it has a very satisfying tempo. Wendy Hiller made her triumphant film debut as Eliza, the Covent Garden flower girl, and Leslie Howard is marvellously high-spirited and combative as the smug Professor Higgins, who trains Eliza to speak like a lady. Anthony Asquith and Leslie Howard directed. The cast includes Wilfrid Lawson, Marie Lohr, Scott Sunderland, Jean Cadell, and David Tree. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 22.)

RAN—Set in the sixteenth century, Kurosawa's epic spectacle, a variation on the theme of "King Lear," is static, but it deepens, and it has its own ornery splendor. It's a totally conceptualized work—perhaps the biggest piece of conceptual art ever made. For the first forty minutes or so, the picture is all preparation, and it seems dead, but then the preparation begins to pay off, and by the end the fastidiousness and the monumental scale

of what Kurosawa has undertaken can flood you with admiration. With Mieko Harada as Lady Kaede, the vengeful demon who brings down the House of Ichimori; Tatsuya Nakadai as the warlord head of the clan; the Japanese transvestite pop star known as Peter as the Fool; and Hisashi Ikawa as Kurogane, who defies Lady Kaede. The fine, harsh, percussive score is by Toru Takemitsu. In Japanese. (2 hours and 41 minutes.) (1/13/86) (Cinema I.)

REVOLUTION—Everything in this picture, which goes from the beginning of the American War of Independence in 1776 to the end of combat in 1783, seems dissociated. The director, Hugh Hudson, plunges us into gritty, muddy restagings of famous campaigns, but we don't find out what's going on in these campaigns, or what their importance is in the course of the war. As Tom Dobb, a Glasgow-born fur trader from the Adirondack wilderness who turns guerrilla fighter, Al Pacino wears eighteenth-century homespun and talks with a Scots accent but in the rhythms of the Bronx. Nastassja Kinski (Daisy McConahay is her name here, and Joan Plowright is her mother) assists at field amputations and runs supply wagons through redcoats' lines, but she seems hectic and feverish and keeps oozing tears. Hudson and the scriptwriter, Robert Dillon, present the war as a primal Oedipal revolt of the Colonies against the parent country, and the relationships of the characters are designed in Oedipal pairs; Hudson also stages torture orgies to indicate how sadistic the redcoats are, and scenes are devised to set up echoes of the "Rocky" series and "Rambo." This is a certifiably loony picture; it's so bad it puts you in a state of shock. With Donald Sutherland, sporting a big, black, hairy mole on his jaw, as a redcoat sergeant major who's a sexual psychopath; and Annie Lennox, Sid Owen as Tom's young son Ned, and Dexter Fletcher as Ned grown up. Filmed in England. (1/13/86) (Manhattan, and R.K.O. Century National Twin; through Jan. 16.)

ROCK ALL NIGHT (1957)—Crude and dull. The triumph of a shorty with an inferiority complex, plus rock and roll. Roger Corman is responsible. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 23.)

SHOAH—Claude Lanzmann's nine-hour-and-twenty-three-minute documentary epic "Shoah" is made up of interviews with people who have knowledge of the Nazi extermination centers—whether as slave laborers, railroad workers, technicians, bureaucrats, or just onlookers. The film has fine, painful moments, and it's widely regarded as a masterpiece. But some may feel that it lacks the moral complexity of a great work, and may also find it logy and diffuse, and exhausting right from the start. Divided into Part I (four hours and thirty-three minutes) and Part II (four hours and fifty minutes). In Polish, French, German, English, Hebrew, and Yiddish, with English subtitles where necessary. (12/30/85) (Cinema Studio.)

A SLIGHT CASE OF MURDER (1938)—It's a burlesque of gangster films, with Edward G. Robinson as a bootlegger who turns legitimate and faces one mortifying mess after another. He drives his family out for a weekend in a country house and finds the corpses of four gangsters sitting around a table in the spare bedroom. Eventually, at a party back in town, the four are brought in and strung up on hooks in a closet. The director, Lloyd Bacon, succeeds in getting giggles out of some of these scenes, but his style is too broad, and the tone of the film is archly childish. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 19.)

SWEET DREAMS—As the pop-and-country singer Patsy Cline, Jessica Lange has a raw physicality that's challenging and heroic. The singing voice that comes out of her is from the vocal tracks of recordings that Patsy Cline made between 1960 and 1963, and Lange's body lives up to the sound. The director, Karel Reisz, doesn't step back from Patsy; she's taken on her own terms. As Patsy's husband, Ed Harris brings the role a tragic, pitiable sweetness. With Ann Wedgeworth as Patsy's mother. People cry at this movie though it isn't sentimental—it's an honest tearjerker. (10/21/85) (Festival; starting Jan. 17.)

THE TRIP TO BOUNTIFUL—Geraldine Page gives a controlled, all-out performance as Carrie Watts, an old-age pensioner who wears seat-sprung housedresses and lives in a tiny apartment in Houston with her sad, defeated son.



and his shrill wife, who keeps picking on her. The movie—a weeper—is about Carrie's longing to escape and return to Bountiful, the Gulf Coast town where she grew up; she runs away, gets on a bus headed in the right direction, and lives out her dream. Directed by Peter Masterson, from Horton Foote's adaptation of his 1953 teleplay (Lillian Gish starred in it on TV and Broadway), it's a "spiritual" picture—a tribute to the decency of the common people who endure by doing the best they can, and it has the glow that movies get when they're about the need to have compassion. The camera is meant to be the mirror of Carrie's soul, but we look in that mirror for so long that finally all we see is Geraldine Page acting. Foote can't make poetry out of material as laundered and denatured as what he comes up with here. The movie is intended to be a hymn, but all he and Masterson can do is give some of the characters a limp, anesthetized grace. With John Heard as the son, Carlin Glynn as the daughter-in-law, Rebecca DeMornay as a soldier's young wife, and Richard Bradford as a Texas sheriff. (1/13/86) (Cinema II.)

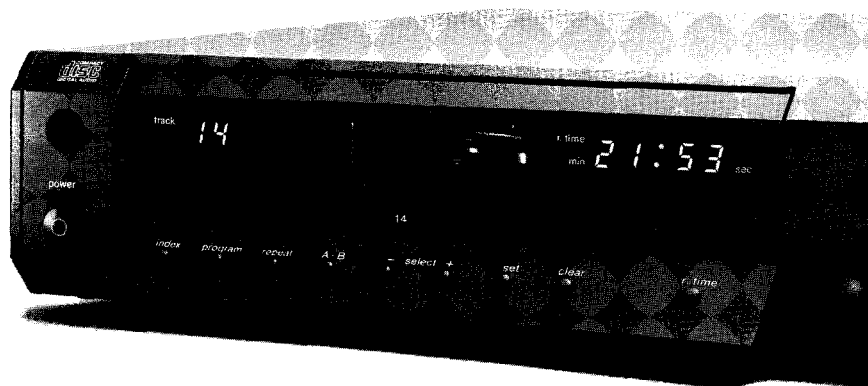
TWICE IN A LIFETIME—This miracle of psycho-banalinity presents the basic story of a long-married middle-aged man (Gene Hackman, as a Seattle steelworker) who experiences a renewal of vitality when he has an affair with a younger woman (Ann-Margret), but the story is now so dressed up in the language of self-help books that the man is a life-affirming force—and not only for himself but also for his wife of thirty years (Ellen Burstyn), whom he leaves. The movie could be every errant husband's self-justifying fantasy. Directed by Bud Yorkin, from a script by Colin Welland. With Amy Madigan, Brian Dennehy, and Ally Sheedy. (12/2/85) (Lincoln Plaza... ♀ Gemini; through Jan. 16.)

THE TWO OF US (1967)—Set during the Occupation in France, this account of the friendship that develops between an anti-Semitic old peasant (Michel Simon) and a little Jewish boy is affecting but rather too artless. Directed by Claude Berri. In French. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 22.)

WHITE NIGHTS—The magnificent Mikhail Baryshnikov plays a Russian ballet star who defected from the Soviet Union to the U.S. and is on his way to dance in Tokyo when his plane crash-lands in Siberia. The movie's central gimmick is that the ballet dancer is put in the care of a black American tap dancer (Gregory Hines, acting morose and embittered) who defected from the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. The tap dancer is miserable, and now a K.G.B. colonel tells him that if he can't convince the ballet star to renounce the U.S. and perform in just a few days at a Kirov gala, he'll be sent to work in the mines. This cheap melodramatic plot is like a straitjacket that the director, Taylor Hackford, got into voluntarily and can't wriggle out of. It's often ludicrously bad, but there's enough footage of Baryshnikov to carry you past the embarrassments of the tacky script. With Isabella Rossellini, Jerzy Skolimowski, Geraldine Page, Helen Mirren, and John Glover. The script is credited to James Goldman and Eric Hughes. (11/18/85) (34th St. East, Coronet, and Ziegfeld.)

WOMEN IN LOVE (1970)—Ken Russell's movie could perhaps be described as a gothic sex fantasy on themes from D. H. Lawrence's novel. Visually and emotionally, it's a highly colored swirl of emotional impressions, bursting with intensity that isn't really grounded in anything. Probably to see this particular movie before reading the book is desecration; the novel is a staggering accomplishment, and it's mad to jeopardize one's vision of it by reading it in terms of the actors and images of the movie. (The movie is rather like Lawrence's accounts of bad sex.) With Glenda Jackson, Jennie Linden, Alan Bates, and Oliver Reed. The adaptation is by Larry Kramer. (Cinema Village; Jan. 22-23.)

YOUNG AND INNOCENT (1937; known as "The Girl Was Young" in the United States)—Hitchcock reworks "The 39 Steps," this time using a very young hero and heroine. Once again, the hero is accused of a murder he didn't commit; he tries to track down the real killer while the police track him. The bewildered teen-age girl (Nova Pilbeam) who tries to help him is too earnest a conception to be very amusing; the film is pretty fair Hitchcock, though not as sexy or as witty as "The 39 Steps." With Derrick de Marney, Basil Radford, Percy Marmont, and Mary Clare. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 24-25.)



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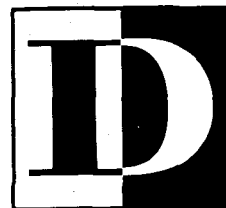
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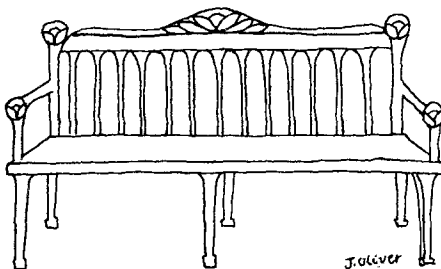
LAST week, things were getting a little wild in the news. But then things are bound to get wild whenever we permit Colonel Muammar Qaddafi to occupy the center of our attention—when we rivet our gaze on him, pore over his unpredictable and contradictory utterances, and organize our foreign policy around the question of what to do about him. A few days after he had praised as “freedom fighters” the terrorists who killed innocent passengers at the Rome and Vienna airports (he offered this opinion to the press during a short break he took from theatrically plowing barley in a field), he was on the evening news calling them “mad.” And, just in case we weren’t bewildered enough already, he added that in response to the sanctions against Libya ordered by President Reagan he would drive American military bases out of Europe. When Qaddafi was asked how he was going to manage that, he said that he was going to get behind the European peace movement and the Greens, and this should do the job. As he made these pronouncements, he drew himself up with a solemn hauteur, as if to say “So there!” to the assembled press and the whole world. Here in the United States, things were hardly on an even keel, either. A United States senator was publicly muttering about the possibility of “eliminating” Qaddafi. And a radio station in Maine was inciting its listeners to send bags of garbage to him—a response that, in its sheer oddness, might have been thought up by Qaddafi himself.

Fantastically, the nation that found itself diplomatically and politically isolated in the aftermath of the airport attacks and Qaddafi’s statements about them was not Libya but the United States. Only one of our European

allies had joined in the sanctions ordered by the President, and all the members of the Islamic Conference Organization were offering outright support to Qaddafi in opposing United States policy. As for the Soviet Union, that nation—quite undisturbed, evidently, by Qaddafi’s actions or by his meandering and mercurial press conferences—was busy supplying him with the latest thing in surface-to-air missiles: the SA-5 missile. If the United States were to take military action against Libya, and one of these missiles, which are manned by Soviet personnel, were to shoot down an American plane, then a crisis could ensue that would greatly transcend Libya, and threaten the entire world. In itself, of course, Libya is a small, weak country—a fact that may explain its alleged involvement in terrorism, for terrorism is a tactic of the weak—and its leader is a man whose statements are not ordinarily given great weight by the rest of the world. People can choose their own words to describe Qaddafi’s mental state—President Reagan called him “flaky,” and later denied that he considered Qaddafi mentally unbalanced—but most people would agree that Qaddafi is not a man on whom they would like the peace of the world to depend. Yet in recent days that is the position he has assumed—in large measure because of the actions of the United States. That he may now hold fearful airline passengers all over the world hostage to terrorism is horrible enough. That he should hold the

whole world hostage is intolerable. But there he is, almost every night, on our television screens, wearing one unexpected outfit or another, glowering at the cameras, expounding his views, making his threats. And we must take it all seriously, because of what—partly as the result of our own actions—has come to be at stake. Whatever outrages he has committed, and whatever steps we may take to prevent further ones, we have somehow let him acquire an undue importance in our imaginations, in our lives, and in the life of the world. By week’s end, he was setting the tone, he was calling the shots—he was in the cockpit. The usual order of things had been inverted. Lacking much power of his own, he had used ours to draw us into his world, upsetting our stability with his instability, and overcoming our strength with his weakness.

IN the not so distant past, we seem to remember, the prototypical newspaper headline was a notably concrete communication, on the order of “\$1 MILLION GEM STOLEN” or “WAR DECLARED.” Recently, though, newspapers have been going in for hazier, more abstract stuff—as the *Washington Post* did the other day when, above a top-of-the-front-page story, it ran the headline “SEN. HART SHUNS DESIGNATION AS DEMOCRATIC FRONT RUNNER.” In the weeks since Senator Edward Kennedy announced that he was dropping out of the 1988 Presidential race (and thus formally left a campaign before he had formally entered it), columnists and others—jovially referred to in the *Post* story as “some folks”—had been saying that Hart now had to be considered the front-runner for the Democratic nomination. Notwithstanding the fact that we are still about three years away from the election, the commentators—



in one of those journalistic wavelets which are forever sweeping back and forth across the political waters, providing each week with its tiny addition to the sum of the world's received (if highly transient) wisdom—had been almost unanimously proclaiming this judgment, which had thereby acquired the status of a sort of fact. At any rate, so firmly established had the judgment become that Senator Hart felt that he had to deal with it in a news conference and the press felt that it had to deal with his words on the subject as major news. As it happens, the occasion on which he shunned the status of front-runner in the Presidential race was a press conference he had called to withdraw from this year's Senate race for the seat from Colorado that he now holds. So the full factual background for the *Post's* story (to use the word "factual" in its traditional sense for a moment) was not any explicit step forward in the Presidential race by any candidate but two *withdrawals*—Kennedy's from the Presidential race itself and Hart's from his senatorial race. The rest was created by the news media—when, in a circular procedure disturbingly close to talking to oneself, they started their little wavelet rolling across the scene and then duly reported a ripple of that wavelet coming back from Senator Hart's lips.

The week's morsel of received wisdom had a corollary. Just as firmly as the commentators had elevated Hart to the top position in the race, they opined that this was bad news for him. That opinion offered a new twist on the commonplace observation that "momentum"—what George Bush, in his race for the Presidency in 1980, called "the Big Mo"—breeds more momentum. The revised observation was that if momentum has to be maintained over a long period the process of its feeding on itself may reverse: it may start to consume itself, and the candidate with it. Aware that, according to the iron laws of fads and trends, political and otherwise, what is praised today must be damned tomorrow—what is puffed up today must be punctured tomorrow—the commentators pronounced a two-year term as front-runner to be perilous. The commentators were singularly well equipped to make a prediction in this matter, for if the front-runner "designation," which they have conferred, is withdrawn between now and the first primary it is likely to be they who withdraw it. Of course, when a prophet makes a "prediction" about his own

actions, it has the color of a threat, and to whatever extent that is the case here the commentators' chorused judgment of Senator Hart's prospects can be interpreted as an early reminder to him of their power over his fortunes. In the circumstances, Hart's Caesar-like decision to shun the prematurely offered throne of front-runnership was probably wise—or, at least, politically smart. By cordially declining to receive this booby-trapped gift, he beats the press at its own trend-making, trend-breaking game, and positions himself to try to start up the Big Mo at a more auspicious moment.

It is tempting to take the news media to task for interfering in the news, by "reporting" on events they have created themselves, but that would be too simple. The selection of the President of the United States is not a pseudo event, and the trials that an aspirant is made to undergo, no matter how preposterously inappropriate we may judge some of them to be, are worthy of news coverage. Nor can the role of the news media themselves be either eliminated from the process or overlooked. It may be absurd that just because someone is "designated" the front-runner now he may lose the election later, but it may also be true. There seems to be no easy exit from this particular hall of mirrors. For increasingly protracted periods before each election, it appears, we are condemned to watch a lengthy parade of purely formal events—events that refer only to themselves and have nothing whatever to do with the rest of the world.

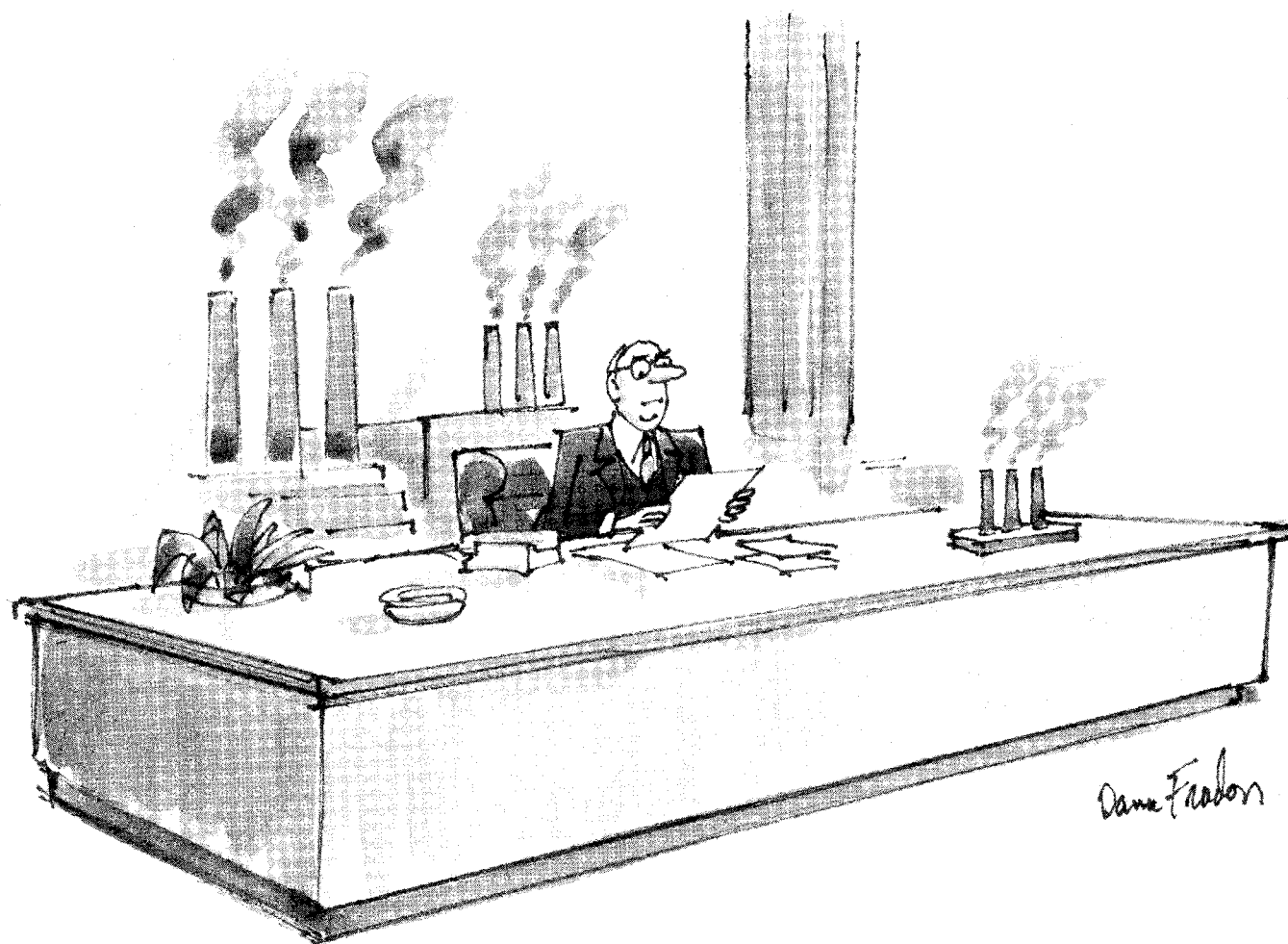
A Piece of History

ASSUMING our occasional role as an eyewitness of historic events, we recently made a point, on a visit to London, of attending an auction, at Christie's, of "Finest and Rarest Wines," the crowning feature of which was a hand-blown amber-green bottle engraved "1787 LAFITTE TH. J." and believed by a number of

distinguished wine experts to have been part of an order placed in 1790 by Thomas Jefferson, who managed, among his not inconsiderable other accomplishments, to become America's first wine connoisseur. The wines were offered for sale by Hardy Rodenstock, a West German music publisher who is also well known in the upper echelons of wine fanciers as a connoisseur and ardent collector of fine old wines. How he came into possession of the 1787 Lafite (to give the wine its present spelling) is something of a mystery. All that Mr. Rodenstock has been willing to disclose is that the Lafite was among a cache of a dozen or so ancient bottles of wine that were discovered not long ago in a very old, bricked-up cellar in Paris. The trove also included two more bottles of 1787 Lafite, three bottles of 1787 Château Margaux, three bottles of 1787 Château Brane-Mouton (now Mouton-Rothschild), and six bottles of Château d'Yquem—three from 1787 and three from 1784. One of the bottles of 1784 Yquem was the centerpiece of a wine tasting organized last year by Mr. Rodenstock for an international circle of wine connoisseurs and collectors, including Michael Broadbent, the director of Christie's wine department. "The 1784 that I tasted was soft, still sweet, and without fault," Mr. Broadbent told us when we visited him in his office the day before the sale. His tasting note, made at the time, is more lyrical: "Color is perfect old amber, bright and lively; bouquet perfect! Unbelievable. Scented vanilla and blancmange. On the palate, still sweet, with perfect weight, balance, and acidity. Dry finish. Flavor of peaches and cream." How well the 1787 Yquem has stood up over two centuries will become known next year, when Mr. Rodenstock plans to open a bottle of it at a tasting that he has arranged to put on at Monticello.

Jefferson was not only very fond of wine, Mr. Broadbent told us, but a great believer in its social value. "No nation is drunken where wine is cheap," Jefferson wrote to a friend, and throughout his life he argued consistently for low tariffs on wine, on the ground that "it is, in truth, the only antidote to the bane of whiskey." His knowledge of wine was significantly broadened during the four years he spent as Minister to France, though he hardly went there as an oenological novice. Jefferson fell in love with France—its culture, its political philosophy, its cuisine, and its wines,





which for the first time he was able to taste at their best. In 1787, he made a tour of the French wine regions and, with typical thoroughness, classified the various growths; those he named as being of the first quality were (in modern spelling) Margaux, Latour, Haut-Brion, Lafite, and Yquem. During his visits to the vineyards, Jefferson made it his business to become acquainted with the proprietors and to arrange to buy directly from them rather than from wine merchants.

After returning to America and accepting the post of Secretary of State in President Washington's Cabinet, Jefferson continued to buy wine directly from French vineyards, employing as his shipping agents Fenwick Mason & Company, in Bordeaux. (Joseph Fenwick was United States Consul there.) In September, 1790, Jefferson sent off letters to a number of chateau owners for a considerable amount of wine for Washington and for him, the lots to be identified with the initials "G.W." and "T.J.," respectively. According to an impressive amount of written evidence (Jefferson saved the letters he received and copies of those he wrote) collected by Mr. Broadbent, the

"1787 Lafitte Th. J." coming up for sale was part of the September, 1790, order. "Of course, there is no proof," Mr. Broadbent said. "What we *can* say with certainty, on the advice of Hugo Morley-Fletcher, who is our glass expert here, is that the bottle is of the correct age. Also that the lettering and wheel engraving on the bottle are absolutely right for the period. The cork appears to be original, and the cork of a bottle of 1787 Yquem found in the same cellar has been analyzed in a German laboratory and proved to be original. Furthermore, we have circumstantial evidence—masses of it—supporting the ordering of this wine and its identification. That's about it."

Lot 337, the "1787 Lafitte Th. J.," was the first item in the afternoon sale, scheduled to begin, in Christie's West Room, at two-thirty. Some time before that, television crews began setting up cameras and lights, which turned the West Room into something resembling a film set. Newspaper photographers were taking pictures of the 1787 Lafite, displayed on green felt in a glass case near the rostrum. All the seats had been occupied, standees were

lined up at the back and sides, and each potential bidder had been issued a bidding board—a device, somewhat larger than a Ping-Pong paddle, bearing the number that had been assigned to the prospective bidder when he or she registered for the sale. Shortly before the auction was scheduled to begin, the 1787 Lafite was removed from the case and handed to a secretary from Mr. Broadbent's office, who held it, with remarkable nonchalance, at the front of the room during the bidding.

At two-thirty precisely, Mr. Broadbent—silver-haired, slender, in a three-piece pin-striped blue suit, a light-blue shirt, and a subtly figured tie, a white handkerchief in his breast pocket—ascended the rostrum. After making a few preliminary remarks and a little joke ("This is one time when the buyer will get something back on the bottle"), he proceeded briskly to Lot 337. The bidding opened at ten thousand pounds, and rose steadily, by two-thousand-pound increments, to forty thousand. A slight pause. "Forty thousand. Forty thousand pounds," Mr. Broadbent repeated. Bidding at once resumed, and ascended without

interruption to fifty thousand pounds. Thereafter, the number of active bidders, of whom there had been seven (all but one, we learned later, connected with the wine business), began to thin out, but the bidding did not falter. The only sound in the room was the voice of Mr. Broadbent announcing the bids, which, after another fleeting pause, at sixty-eight thousand pounds, spiralled upward without hesitation through the seventies and eighties. The bidding had now narrowed down to a contest between a man at the back of the room and a man in the middle. As it continued, they quickly pushed the price by two-thousand-pound segments to a hundred thousand. "One hundred thousand pounds, at the back," Mr. Broadbent said. In the same breath he continued, "A hundred and five. One hundred and five thousand pounds, in the middle. At one hundred and five thousand pounds. Going at one hundred and five. Any more? One hundred and five thousand." He brought the gavel down. Almost instantly, the room resounded

with applause. From start to finish, the bidding had taken a minute and thirty-nine seconds.

The successful bidder turned out to be Christopher Forbes, a vice-president of the magazine *Forbes* and a son of the magazine's wealthy and colorful publisher, Malcolm Forbes. (The underbidder was Marvin Shanken, who is the editor and publisher of a number of periodicals, including *The Wine Spectator*, a semi-monthly newspaper for the trade.) As photographers and reporters gathered around Mr. Forbes, he said that he planned to depart for New York late that afternoon in his company's plane with his purchase, which would be displayed in the *Forbes* office, on a dining-room table that once belonged to Thomas Jefferson. (The Forbes family collects Presidential memorabilia, among many other things.) When a reporter observed that a hundred and five thousand pounds (or a hundred and fifty thousand dollars) was a lot of money for one bottle of wine, Mr. Forbes smiled, and said, "It's more than a

bottle of wine. It's a piece of history." Soon afterward, he walked out of Christie's carrying the piece of history in a tote bag that bore the *Forbes* logo and its advertising slogan, "Capitalist Tool."

Later, we had a word with Mr. Broadbent in his office about the sale. Over a glass of champagne (his favorite drink), he said that a hundred and five thousand pounds was far and away the most that had ever been paid for a bottle of wine. The previous record was thirty-eight thousand dollars, for a jeroboam of 1870 Mouton-Rothschild sold at an auction in Dallas in 1984. He said that he had telephoned the news of the new record to the seller, Mr. Rodenstock, in Germany. "He's staggered," Mr. Broadbent said. "His reserve was five thousand pounds." Mr. Broadbent was not a little surprised himself. "I had thought it might bring twenty-five or thirty thousand pounds. Somebody had said it might fetch fifty thousand. That, I thought, frankly, was in the realm of fiction."

How did he feel, we asked, when the bidding went soaring far beyond that figure.

"I will tell you a curious thing about that," he replied. "I first noticed it when I was doing the Heublein auctions in America. During a sale, I found that I was conscious of only three things: the lot number, the step numbers in the bidding, and the number of people with paddles. Just a series of numbers. Afterward, people would say, 'What did you think of the prices?' I really didn't know what they had been at all." After a pause, he added, "However, I realize now that one hundred and five thousand pounds is a very good price indeed." He smiled, and took another sip of champagne.

The Kid

WE are—you may not have known it—creeping up on the Esperanto Centennial. The year 1987 marks the hundredth anniversary of the international language's first grammar, "Internacia Lingvo," by Ludovic (Ludwik) Lazarus (Lejzer) Zamenhof. Esperanto is the language that lets you say "Pli bona pano sen butero, ol kuko sen libero" instead of "Better bread without butter than cake without freedom." At the moment, according to Elizabeth Manson, who works in the New York branch office



"Walter—am I a New Year's resolution?"

of the Universal Esperanto Association, as many as five million people speak the language (it is popular in Brazil and Iran); the library of the British Esperanto Association holds more than thirty thousand Esperanto publications; there is a push to make Esperanto an official language of the European Common Market; and Esperanto will be part of a computer-literacy project, begun in conjunction with International Youth Year, that has already drawn applications from Thailand, Jordan, and Ghana. "Every year, we have a world congress, and thousands of people come from all around the world, and they just talk, talk, talk," said Mrs. Manson.

We started thinking about Esperanto one cold night early this month, when we went to see Genqui Numata, a performance artist from Japan who is known as the Bonsai Kid. He is a small man with shoulder-length hair, which he ties in a ponytail, and when we met him he was wearing flowing black robes and penny loafers. This was his first trip outside Japan, and he had arrived wearing Japanese slippers, but his feet had got cold—or so someone said, for the Bonsai Kid speaks very little English. He was at a downtown art gallery on his way to a photography studio where a funky downtown journal, *PAPER*, was going to take pictures of him, and we offered to help him carry an enormous cardboard box, much too big to fit in a cab, through the streets. Each time he reached a street corner, he would look up and down the avenue. "Limousine," he explained, but he (and we) ended up taking the subway. Upon finally reaching the studio where the shoot was to take place, he opened the cardboard box and pulled out a huge flowerpot with a hole in the middle. He made himself up and donned an elaborate costume, then slipped the pot around his waist and strapped it in place. He opened a compartment in the front of the pot, pulled out a record player shaped like a panda, put on a record of instrumental versions of sixties pop tunes, and began to dance and sing along. It was the nuttiest sight we've seen so far this precentennial year—a human bonsai tree with a manic grin and penny loafers.

We think we know a little about the Kid's story, but since there was no translator around, it might all be a giant mistake. It seems he was once a



"Well, I'm off to brave the elements, so to speak."

very successful commercial artist but felt stifled, so he quit his company, moved to an alley in Tokyo, and began to make Art. He gave us a huge sheaf of material, all of it in Japanese except for "The Declaration of Artist," which he issued when he began his adventure. It reads:

I hereby declare as an Artist.

This is to challenge the situation of Art sterility in this world. Especially in this country, Japan, it seems that the increase and the inundation of Commercial Artists bring us to abuse our talent easily. Anti Commercialism!

I, true artist Genqui Numata, decided to do my duty as art for art and for myself, and establish myself as an Artist alone.

This is an experiment to create freely, life and art, man and art all together. Therefore, the poverty which is caused by this experiment—life and death struggle—just started. I am hoping to do my best from now on and get a hustle on.

The pictures he showed us of his

work contained some stunning ideas. In our favorite he had painted a musical staff on the side of a fish tank and then dumped tadpoles in the water. As they swam, their black bodies appeared as notes, creating endless tunes.

The Kid understood English better than he spoke it, and sometimes he would recognize the thrust of one of our questions and would flip through a Japanese-English dictionary to show us the answer. For instance, we asked him why most Japanese artists chose to do commercial work. He leafed through his book and found the word "rich," but quickly found another entry as well: "to obey; to submit." And then a third: "a habit, a way, a vice." We asked him what his parents thought of his life, and he riffled the pages of his dictionary once again. The entry he pointed to read "feel anxiety; be worried about."



"Well, the tickets sure as hell weren't minimal."

to wear. Like her black stirrup pants.

"It's snowing," Judith announced. She picked up Violet's dropped flashlight and shone it across the back yard. Violet was standing under the clothes dryer, which looked a little like a dead tree.

"Have I missed the grand finale?" Judith asked. "It is seven o'clock." She pointed the flashlight straight up into the night, and I could see snow falling, in a thin, bright column, flake by flake by flake.

VIOLET had gone upstairs to find her avocado pit. Ever since I announced one night, in a momentary lapse of good temper, that I'd be damned if I'd water her pit, Violet has made a great show of carting it back and forth to Judith's on the weekends. This morning, I hid it under her bed, so it would take her a while to

find it. If she were older, or smarter, she'd accuse me of hiding it, but she wouldn't. I knew she wouldn't.

Judith and I were sitting at the kitchen table. Keith was shovelling the driveway. When Judith is around, he likes to do helpful things like that, because he never did them when they were married.

"So what's new this week?" Judith asked me. She asks me this every week.

"We went to Violet's concert Wednesday night. Violet was the mouse in 'The Farmer in the Dell.'"

"'The Farmer in the Dell!'" said Judith. "God, I remember that. What a sick song. Do you think any of them even knew what they were singing about?"

I wasn't sure what Judith meant, so I just shrugged.

"The trouble with these suburban school systems is they're in a time

warp. This whole place is in a time warp. I don't know how you can stand it out here. It drove me crazy. I mean, I can see how someone like Keith, someone in his situation, how it could be good for him, but I can't understand how you endure it."

"I have my work," I said.

"Oh, please," said Judith. "Let's not kid ourselves."

Keith came in, stomping his snowy shoes on the floor and rubbing his hands together: the perfect picture of an industrious husband.

"Am I trapped?" asked Judith. "Or did you free me?"

"All clear," said Keith. He took off his coat and began pouring red wine from a jug into glasses. No one mentioned wine; he was just nervous. Keith doesn't drink anymore, but he thinks it's important for him to serve drinks to other people. He's always

making someone else a drink now.

Judith lit a cigarette and said, "I got the grant." There had been a lot of talk about this grant: Judith talked about it, Keith talked about it, even Violet talked about it. It all involved Belize and a dig next summer and should Judith take Violet. I stayed out of it. I was practicing writing my name backward on a napkin with a red Flair pen. Backward, I wrote a little like Violet.

"Congratulations," said Keith. He placed a glass of wine in front of Judith and one on my napkin. The letters of my name dissolved. There was an awkward silence that I enjoyed and contributed to: I didn't say anything.

"The dates still aren't settled," said Judith. "But I would like to take Violet. I mean, I think it's an opportunity we shouldn't pass up."

Judith is always claiming that she wants to see more of Violet. Violet goes to school out here and stays with Judith in the city on the weekends. Judith is always "looking at" schools in the city for Violet to attend, always talking about taking Violet to Belize with her. In the end, Violet won't go. Mark my words.

"I agree," Keith said.

"I can't find it," Violet yelled down the stairs.

"Look under your bed," I yelled back up. "I think I saw it there this morning." I smiled at Judith, proud of this small victory: I had found Violet's avocado pit.

I MET Keith in Bloomingdale's about this same time two years ago. He was one of the guys who try to spray you with perfume—one of those unnervingly beautiful men: slim-hipped, full-lipped. I held out my wrist, but instead Keith sprayed my neck, leaning toward me and putting a finger on the moist, fragrant spot. He was reflected in all those horrible mirrors, and I felt so much in love so suddenly that I had trouble really seeing him. He seemed to stand there forever with his finger on my warm neck. I didn't buy any perfume, but I went back the next day. On the third day, he quit, but by then he had my phone number.

That happened right after a play he wrote closed. It was Off Off Broadway—for four days. It opened on Thursday and closed after the matinee on Sunday. In the bedroom, there's a

A PEAR LIKE A POTATO

Was it worms, having once bitten
and then wilted away, or some canker
known only to nurserymen? Whatever the reason, the pear,
fresh-plucked from my tree where it leans and struggles
in the garden's dappled corner, is
a heavy dwarf-head whose faceless face
puckers and frowns around a multitude of old problems, its
furrowed brow and evil squint and pursy mouth
and pinched-in reptilian ear rescrambling,
feature for feature, as I rotate
this weight in my hand, this
friendly knot of fruit-flesh, this
pear like a potato.

It wanted to grow, and did. It
had a shape in mind, and if that shape
in transit was waylaid by scars, by cells
too mean to join in, leaving dents between bulges
like quilt-buttons, well, it kept on going
anyway. Our brains
are like this, no doubt, having swelled
in spite of traumas, of languages
we never learned, of grudges never set aside but grown around,
like parasites that died but forever snapped
the rhythm whereby cell links up to cell.
Plato's was a manner of speaking;
perfection's an idea that body and soul
make a run at. Falling short, they fill this world instead
with the lopsided jumble that is: the congregation
of the failed yet not uncheerful,
like this poor pear.

—JOHN UPDIKE

plant he was given by the cast after the last performance. He's very proud of it and won't let me water it. It's one of those plants that bloom just once a year, at Easter—flamelike orange flowers that hang for a few days, then fall, and have to be vacuumed up, because they're poisonous. If the cat eats them, she'll die.

AFTER Judith and Violet left, Keith and I went out to dinner. We always do on Friday nights. We used to go to the Willow River Tav-

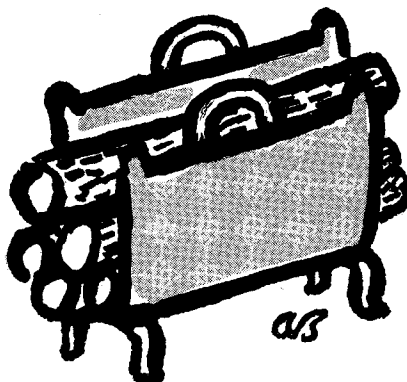
ern, but lately we've been going to Howard Johnson's, because of the money; since Keith stopped his odd jobs, things have gotten tight. Supposedly, he's writing a play about hostages in a department store, but I've yet to read any of it. I never saw his first play, and he won't let me read that, either.

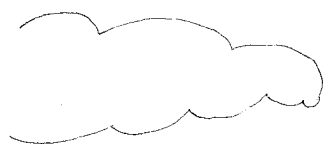
Keith had originally suggested HoJo's because Friday was fish-fry night, with all the fried clams you could eat for five ninety-five. Neither of us like fried fish, though, so we'd stopped pretending to be there for the special. I ordered a bacon cheeseburger, and Keith had beef Stroganoff. Our waitress was one of my customers; I'd sent her to Fiji and Greece. I mentioned this to Keith.

"If Judith takes Violet this summer, maybe we could go away someplace," he said.

"Where?" I asked.

"I don't know," Keith said. "Anywhere. We've never taken advantage of all your freebies. We could really do some travelling."





ED ARNO

"Here he comes again with that damned three-column 'Times' obit of his."

This was just talk. We won't travel. Keith only leaves the house on Tuesday mornings, when he's the writer-in-residence at the Wopford Junior High School. Sometimes I think he has that phobia that afflicts housewives.

"Well, let's wait and see before we make any plans," I said.

"It was just a thought," Keith said. "Wouldn't a beer taste good with that?"

"No," I said. "Not after the wine." After a second I said, "And I wish you wouldn't do that."

"Do what?"

"Encourage me to drink. If I want a drink, I'll have one."

"Oh," said Keith. "I'm sorry. It's part of the therapy. A lot of people are reluctant to drink around alcoholics."

"Well, you don't have to do it for me, Keith. I think it's weird."

"I'm sorry," said Keith. "I didn't know it bothered you." He picked up his fork and drew a pattern of four lines in the sauce on his plate, then crossed it with four more.

Our jet-set waitress appeared beside our table. "Are you done with that?" she asked Keith.

Keith looked at his plate. "Yes," he said. "I'm done."

On the way out, he bought a pistachio ice-cream cone. We sat in the cab of the pickup truck while Keith ate

it. It was still snowing. Keith likes to eat ice cream outside in winter. In the summer, it melts too quickly for him, and he gets upset. In winter, there's no pressure involved.

HE has a key to turn it off," I said. We had just watched the eleven-o'clock news, and we were talking about the man with the artificial heart. I was lying in bed watching Keith shave. There's a sink in the bedroom; it's an old house, and our bedroom was originally the sickroom. It was Keith's grandmother's house.

"I know," Keith said. He smiled at me in the mirror. One side of his face was still covered with lather. He had his shirt off, and his thin back sloped into his pajama bottoms. Keith always shaves before going to bed. I think this is odd. I had understood that men shave in the morning. Keith's face is always smooth when we make love. He smells of after-shave.

Keith finished shaving and put his pajama top on. I watched him from the bed. He knew I was watching. He knew I loved him. I felt as if I'd forgotten to let in the dog, but we don't have a dog. What was it I'd forgotten to do?

"If he wants to die, he has a key to turn it off," I said.

"What if he loses the key?" Keith asked.

"He has another," I said. "I'm sure. Or his wife has one."

"Is he married?"

"I think so."

"Imagine being married to someone with an artificial heart," Keith said. He stood by the window, watching the snow.

"Has it stopped yet?" I asked.

"I think so," Keith said. "It's blowing." He sat on the edge of the bed. I touched him with my foot.

"Do you know what Violet told me?" I asked.

"What?" Keith lay down on the bed, the small of his back arched over my ankles, staring at the ceiling.

"She told me that every Saturday night she and Judith watch 'The Love Boat.' And that Judith cries—she cries every week. Violet didn't understand."

"Didn't understand what?"

"Why Judith cries. She said she pretends not to notice."

For a minute, Keith didn't say anything. For a minute, I thought I might have fallen asleep. Then Keith said, "Why did you tell me that?"

I thought for a moment, because I wasn't sure. "I don't know," I said.

"Just relax," Keith said. "I love you."

O.K., so he really might love me, I told myself. Everything might really be O.K. I tried to get a sense of myself in bed with Keith lying across



"Let's just go in and see what happens."

my ankles and the snow blowing outside. But I couldn't feel it. It would all have been O.K. if I could feel it, but I couldn't. I could have been anywhere. I could have been in Judith's apartment, watching "The Love Boat."

The problem was, everyone had these rituals. Keith with his shaving at night and pushups in the morning and tomato juice before dinner and odd jobs, and Judith with her classes every Monday and Wednesday and Friday and her perfectly planned weekends with Violet, and even Violet with her dancing like a pagan at the first scent of snow, her travelling avocado, her seasonal games with Keith. They all had these things that placed them, that kept them connected. I tried to think of what I did; if I celebrated something, or washed my hair in some particular way that had beauty or

meaning. I couldn't remember how, exactly, I washed my hair.

"I want more rituals in my life," I said.

"What do you mean by rituals?" Keith asked. He got into bed beside me.

"Things you do over and over. That give meaning to your life. You know—rituals."

"You have rituals," Keith said. "Everyone does."

"What are they?" I asked.

"We go out to dinner every Friday," he suggested.

"I was looking for something a little more meaningful than that."

Keith thought for a second. So did I. I remembered how after Keith quit his job perfuming at Bloomingdale's he got another job. He helped dress windows at Bergdorf's. I know be-

cause I saw him there one night, a few nights after we had slept together for the first time. I walked past the window, and he was inside fastening a fishbowl onto the opened, outstretched palm of a mannequin wearing a black fur coat over a bathing suit. I knocked on the window, and Keith looked up. He smiled, but he didn't seem to recognize me. I tried to speak through the glass, but I couldn't. There were two black fish swimming in the fishbowl, and the mannequin was bald.

"I don't know your rituals," Keith finally said. "Only you know them. Rituals are secrets."

I wanted to say, "But I know yours." But I didn't say it, because I suddenly had a sense of this being the moment I could change my life if I really wanted to. I could have run out of the house into the snow, stood under the clothes dryer, and waited for Keith to come out and promise to marry me, or love me forever. Or promise me something.

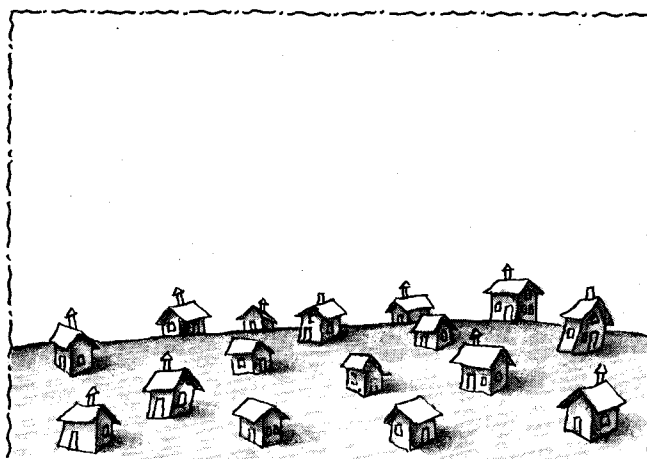
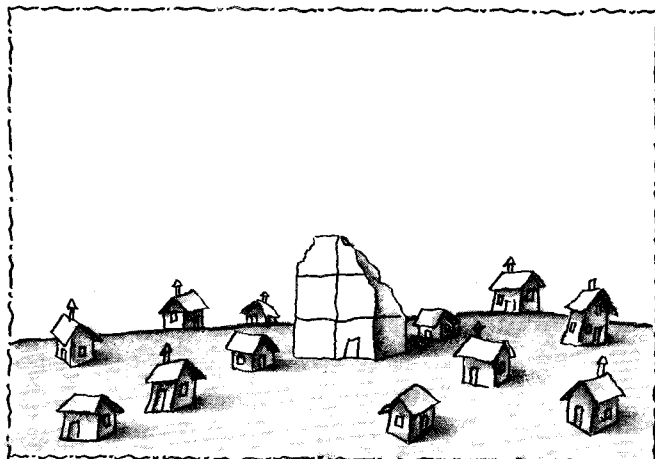
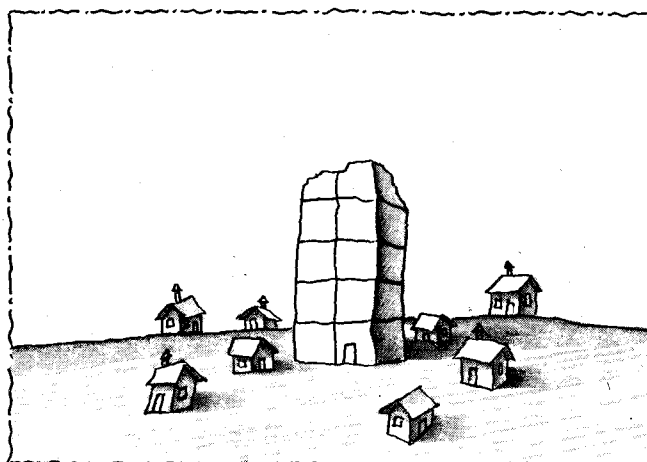
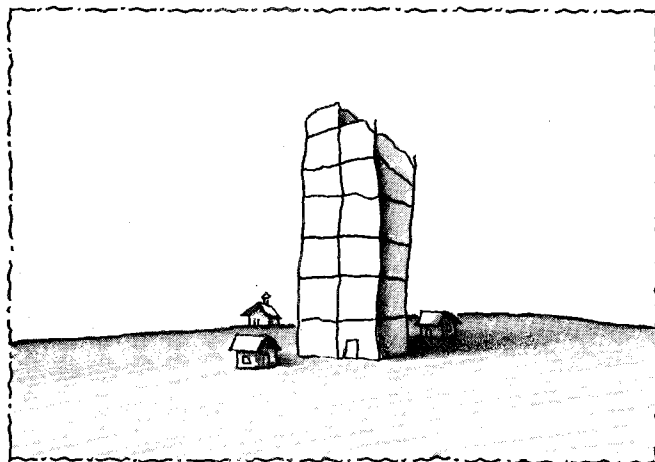
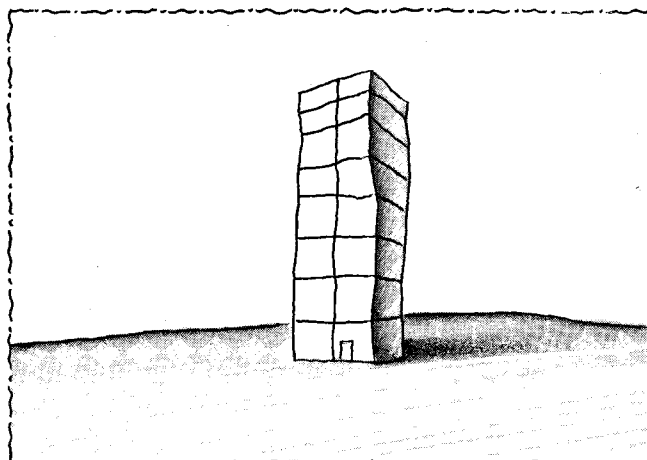
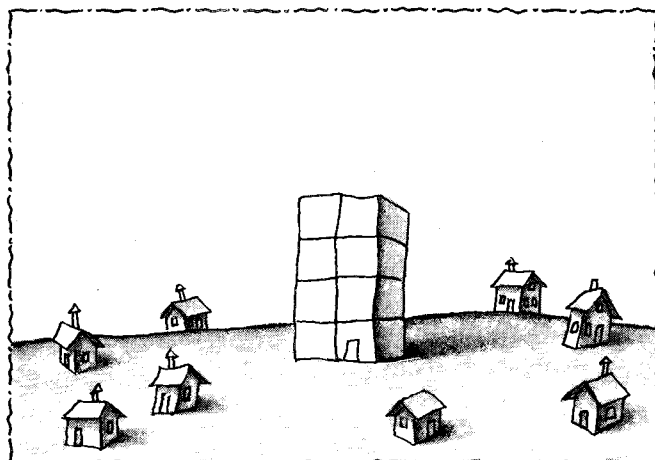
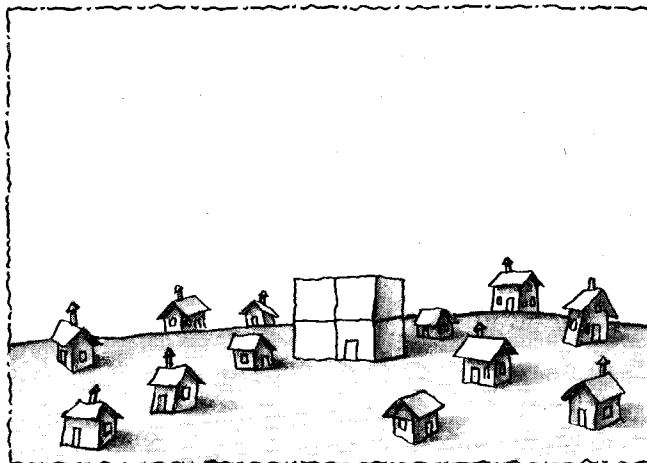
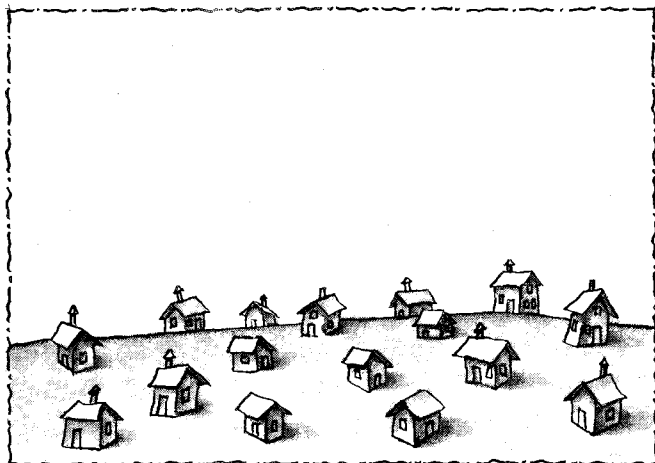
Only I was afraid to change my life, because I didn't expect Keith to marry me, or even love me forever. Keith had his last drink in the restaurant at the top of the World Trade Center. Afterward,

we went over to the other tower and stood on the observation deck, and Keith promised me that if he stayed sober for two years we would get married. But he was drunk then, and he's never mentioned it again. I think he's forgotten about it.

I haven't. I remember perfectly. Lying in bed beside him, I could still picture it—I could even feel it: Keith and I standing together, the lights below us, the wind in our hair, and in all the clouds around us the snow just beginning to form, collecting itself, waiting to fall. —PETER CAMERON

Self-propelled vacuum with quadraflex agitator and automatic carpet height adjustment. Vacuums.—*Adv. in the Sarasota (Fla.) Herald-Tribune.*

Good. We'll take it.



Anthony

ORBITS

IS visiting old parents like visiting old friends? Ginger and Charlie were talking about her mother and father while hot, wet wind poured into the car and took the sound of their voices away from one another. They kept calling "What?" The radio was playing Haydn. They were driving up a hill and were at last in the shade for a while, were dropping into tired silence, when the station changed. Ginger looked at Charlie, but his hands were on the wheel and not the tuner. It was something in the air—radio waves or great explosions on the surface of the sun—or a secret hand in a secret place turning the dial invisibly from Haydn to an instant of rock and roll and to a voice that spat cruel syllables and then back to Haydn again, but with hissings, electrical squeaks.

Ginger said, "I'm turning it off."

They drove without speaking. Charlie waited for the radiator or the battery or all of the tires to explode. Nothing happened. He took the proper turns, and they were there when they'd said they would be.

Charlie had for twenty-five years thought of Ginger's mother as someone who strode. Now she walked slowly, with a kind of sideways hitch in her pace. She had broken a leg two years before, and though she was recovered, she also wasn't. While she had moved about, she'd been safe, he thought. But because she'd been pinned to a chair for some months, whatever it was that one fled had caught her. Her thin lips twisted as if the leg, or her sense of what Charlie was seeing, gave her pain. Ginger's father, once a tall, athletic man, now was curving at the shoulders and walked with uncertainty, as if his balance were afflicted. The hardening arteries that isolated his heart were also affecting his feet: a man filled with blood could still not get enough where it was needed, and he walked as if his feet were tender, bruised. It seemed as though a wind were blowing at him, at both of them, and that each time it gusted they were almost knocked down.

They all hugged. Ginger and Charlie reported on their daughters; one was in a dance camp for

the summer, the other was a waitress at a bar near Provincetown. Ginger's father said, in his deepest professional voice—he had been a labor negotiator—that he still didn't like the idea of Sue Ellen's working in a saloon.

"It's a respectable resort, Daddy," Ginger said when they sat on the porch and drank tall drinks. Insects buzzed at the screen. The leaves hung limp on the maples. Her father opened the collar of his dark knitted sports shirt. He rubbed at the V of his pale chest as if to wipe away the heat. Charlie knew that batteries in a pacemaker underneath the chest were beating this man's heart.

Ginger's mother said, "He thinks Sue Ellen's twelve years old."

"Add seven," Charlie said. "Actually, add about twenty-five. I'm not thinking about anything. I'm trusting her. She's a great kid. Trust is—"

"I can't wait for it," Ginger said.

"Overrated," Charlie said.

"I always trusted *Ginger*," her mother said.

"Yes," Charlie said, "but you learned your lesson, didn't you?"

They were laughing now, at what wasn't funny, at what was only another way of naming what scared them, and they were not talking about her parents' health or their growing

burden: this large Colonial house and its twenty acres; the garden, which demanded tending; the lawn, which Charlie would mow in the morning—the general maintenance, kept up only by hiring strangers, at whose mercy they more and more were. They drank their drinks, they told each other news. Ginger and her mother left, refusing offers to help with making dinner. Ginger's father watched Charlie pour more gin, and he accepted soda water with lemon, and they sat and listened to catbirds shriek. They talked about Aida, the younger girl, who did tap, ballet, modern, and even ballroom dancing at the camp in the Berkshires. Charlie spoke of missing Aida but also of his pleasure at being alone with Ginger for a summer. Ginger's father, in turn, spoke of how they still sometimes realized all over again that Ginger didn't live with them. He said it gently, then shook his head, as if to signal how absurd he thought himself to be.

"Fathers," Charlie said.

"The softest, most demanding species of man," his wife's father said. "Nothing's worse." He adjusted a cushion at his back. Charlie watched his father-in-law's biceps and forearms under the pale skin. There was good muscle, but the skin was softening. He looked at its scabs and bruises, moles and spots and furrows, puckers.

"You did a good job," Charlie said.

"You're kind to say it. I did try to shut up a great deal."

"I wish I could learn to do that."

"Well, you will. The girls won't listen to you, and Ginger'll grow weary of hearing you say what nobody needs to hear, and you'll become a quiet man. Surprise. People will talk about how quiet you've become."

"You know," Charlie said, "nothing's *wrong*. I'm loving how they're growing up. Ginger and I are fine. There isn't anything really *wrong*."

Her father, who had more hair on top of his head than Charlie did, smoothed it over, pushed it into place, and folded his hands in his lap. The lap disappears, too, Charlie noticed: you become a stick figure drawn by a kid. Her father said, "Don't worry about it, Charlie. I'm making you ner-



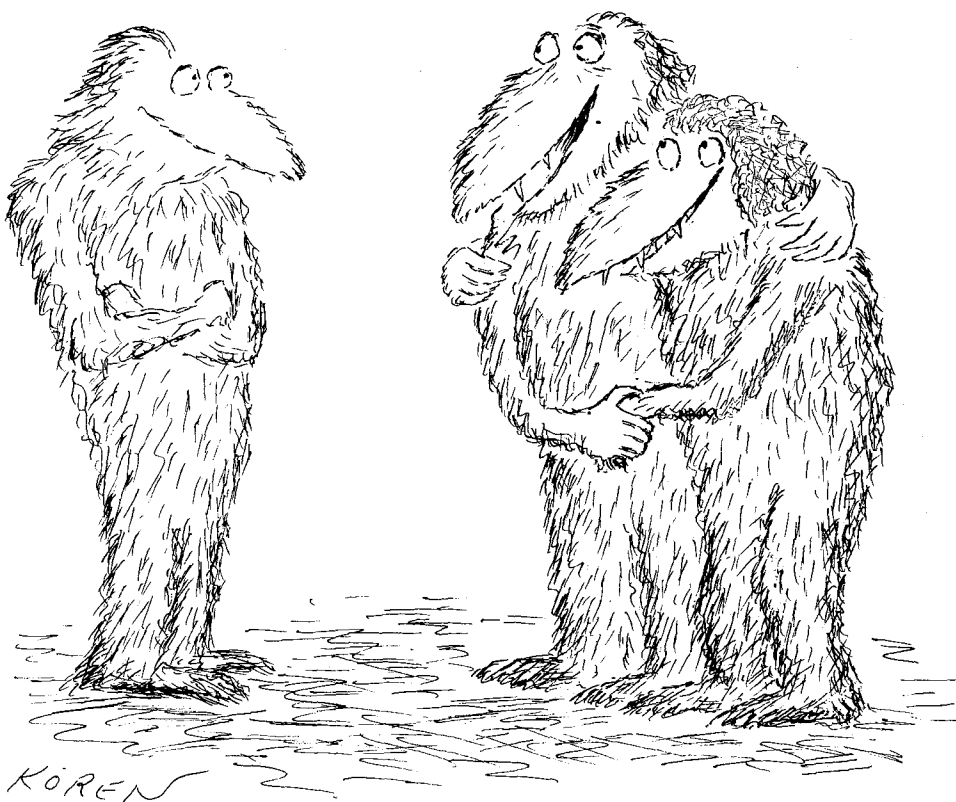
The Jolly Shirt

vous. Old people seem to have that effect, sometimes."

"No," Charlie said. He shook his head. He imitated the hair-pat gesture, but rubbed only fuzz and scalp. He said, and he heard the conviction in his voice as he said it, "No."

They ate a cold poached fish, and Ginger and Charlie drank Sancerre, while her parents drank only water. It was a lovely wine, and Charlie drank a lot of it—almost enough to make him smack his lips and comment on the generosity of a man who, unable to drink because of his health, would provide a first-class wine for those who could enjoy it. Instead, Charlie held his glass up and beamed at the wine. His father-in-law nodded and grinned. Charlie watched Ginger's mother's face twist during the meal. Her lips almost curled. It came and went, as the voice breaking into the rock and roll breaking into the Haydn had come and gone. For dessert they ate fresh fruit. Ginger cracked nuts for everybody. She had done this, always, as a young girl, her father pointed out. Eating none, she distributed nutmeat to all. Charlie decided suddenly that her mother was suffering physically because of thoughts that danced like electrical charges through her. Her daughter, whose presence she sought, was reminding her of what she had lost and had to lose. When they spoke of the girls away for the summer, or of Ginger going off to school so many years before, or of Ginger's second, and very difficult, pregnancy, the language set the impulse off, and a mother lost her child to time, and therefore herself, and the fact shot from her memory and hummed beneath her white hair like the insects at the porch.

There was no change of subject possible. They spoke of absent daughters, absent friends, the ailments of Presidents, and policies of nations. Ginger cracked nuts, as if she were the little child of these seventy-six-year-olds, surrounded by the house that they once had run but that now, with its demands for paint and new plumbing, its dampness in the basement, squirrels in the eaves, was running them. Around them, the grass rose to challenge their tenure, and the moths, as darkness came on, beat with big wings at the screens on the kitchen windows. Charlie watched the face of his wife's mother as it was assaulted by what he hadn't thought to any



"I'm giving love one more try."

longer possess, much less brandish: youth.

INSIDE, television reception was very poor. The Carol Burnett rerun broke into dots and a now familiar hissing. Public Broadcasting was a purple haze that sounded like a waterfall. They went back out to the porch. Ginger's mother reported on dead associates and distant relatives, a local sewage-tax scandal, and residential-zoning conflicts. Her father commented on Saudi Arabians who had purchased large parcels of land nearby.

They sat for a while, and then Ginger's mother said, "I hate this house." "You love it," her father said. "You're angry because I forgot to open the cellar doors and windows this summer to air the damp out."

"I'm angry because that means I have to remember it."

Charlie said, "There's always something to take care of."

"Unless you live in a—in one of those old places," Ginger's mother said.

"No," Charlie said. "No. I wasn't saying that."

"You know how many perfectly rational, intelligent people get dumped into those places!" her mother said.

Ginger's father said, "Don't worry so much. I promise. As long as I can drawl and drool and mutter, I'll remind you that the cellar needs its airing out."

Her mother limped into the house and they sat in the memory of her tension. Ginger sighed. Then she said, "Oh, look at that moon!" It was full and threw a startling light, which appeared to go no distance but to burn in place. Ginger's father called for his wife to return. "The moon," he called. "Come look at the moon."

They waited, like children who had built a version of the sky, for the disgruntled elder who would come and maybe approve. She did come, with decaffeinated coffee, an offering.

Ginger's mother said, "What planets are those alongside it? Or are they stars?"

Ginger said, "Isn't one of them red? Wouldn't that be Mars?"

"It might be," her mother said. "But it might be a star."

Ginger's father said, "There are two more—I can't name them. I didn't know they clustered like that, all together."

"It's probably rare," Ginger said.

Ginger's mother said, "Probably very infrequent. Yes. I never heard of

it before. I can't imagine how long it might take for them to shine together again."

Charlie said, "It probably happens once a week."

Nobody laughed. The reddish star or planet was above the moon, and they could see a larger, brighter body glowing orange-white above whatever it was that shone like rust, or terracotta. Something else—surely it was a planet, Charlie thought, naming it Jupiter, knowing that he would think, right or wrong, of Jupiter when he thought of tonight—seemed a great white balloon.

"Imagine," Ginger said. Charlie knew that she would say it—how would one not?—and he regretted it for her. "Sue Ellen and Aida can see this." Charlie squeezed at the bridge of his nose, hoping to shut off her speech. "And when we talk to them," she said, waving at the terra-cotta planet or star, the blue-white, brilliant maybe-Jupiter, "we can say they saw—we all saw it together. What nobody might see again for who knows *how* long."

Ginger looked up to see her mother glancing down. No one needed to say who would not be on the surface of the earth to look at the sky so many years from tonight. But no one seemed capable of saying anything diversionary. So they sat for what seemed a very long while as the darkness deepened, and as the stars and planets in their slow but fugitive formation rose in the blue-black sky.

Then Ginger's father's voice rumbled, deep and happy, from the chaise on which her mother sat. He was still sitting on his chair, at the other side of the porch, but his voice rolled out from a bulky cassette recorder with which her mother was fiddling. He spoke of negotiating with a Taiwan national, and of how the man had outwitted him, and his voice was cheery and possessive: he clearly knew that he was being recorded, and he seemed to enjoy letting someone preserve what only he could tell.

"I've been making little tapes of some of Dad's stories," Ginger's mother said. Ginger sighed a long and shaken breath. Her mother said, "Don't worry. I won't take down anything you say, dear."

Ginger said, "I don't mind."

Her mother said, "When children grow up, they sound different. The most they can do is talk about what it was like when they were young. But they don't sound the same."

Ginger said, "No."

THE FLUTIST

My dreamy cousin, I see you standing on a ledge
above the Batten Kill.

You seem to be waiting for someone,
head to the side, your tall body all alert—

even at sixteen,
already waiting, as if you already knew
the many small apartments, many small jobs
you would never quite want,

the men not quite loyal, the music
you love so much
never quite perfected,
but blown from your lips the best that you knew how,

and your life, like most of ours,
a series of small recitals and arpeggios
before a few
ladies in folding chairs—

waiting for someone, waiting
almost on tiptoe
upon a ledge, among the pines,
above the Batten Kill.

—DICK ALLEN

"That was a hell of a story," Charlie said.

"He robbed us blind," her father said, "because he was out-and-out smarter than I was. He did his job better. I couldn't help admiring him."

Charlie nodded in the dark. Ginger's mother played more tape-recorded sounds—Baltimore orioles calling, her own voice saying, "It's a soft, wet night," a neighbor saying how she had spent her day—and then Ginger's father's voice returned, sounding nothing so much as pleased. It was as if he knew that one day his voice would speak about the Taiwanese, or about the man who had tried to sell him a slum in Bedford-Stuyvesant, and that his tones would be charming, his story engaging, and his body long gone. He was winsome for the future, Charlie thought. He was speaking from the grave. And there he sat, before his wife, who mourned him already, and before his daughter, mostly absent these days, whose daughters were now mostly ab-

sent as well. Charlie's eyes ached. Jupiter glowed below the moon, and Mars above, as Ginger's mother played the cassette.

In the darkness, Charlie could barely see any of them now. Ginger's mother said, "I want you to hear something near the beginning of the tape. It's sort of funny. Dad tells about the man from the aircraft company. The fellow who couldn't tolerate dust. Did he ever tell you about that?"

"I must have bored them with that one a dozen times."

Ginger's voice said, "Tell it, Daddy."

Her mother said, "Let the tape tell it. Wait. I have to find it. It's near the beginning. Wait a minute." She clicked buttons, reversing the tape. She pushed another button that sent it forward. She clicked and pushed, making the tape whine and jump and say fragments of sound.

Ginger said, "Daddy, go ahead."

He began to talk while they sat back, invisible to one another. The hum and snick and sudden voices of the tape recorder played like a background tune in a shop while her mother searched the tape for his story. He was saying, "You see, his work involved the manufacture of instruments for fighter planes. One airplane in particular, an interceptor. They called it an all-weather interceptor. Well, you can imagine how an air-



plane that was supposed to fly in fog and rain might rely on its instruments. So of course the delicacy of their manufacture had to match the delicacy of the performance expected of them. Men were going to be sealed up, alone, ten miles in the air, surrounded by tons of metal alloy and wires and high explosives and kerosene, and they were going to rely exclusively on those instruments—except for their wits, of course. And who knows better than present company how little *those* can sometimes be counted on?"

As if he had rehearsed, he paused for polite laughter. Perhaps if they had sat in daylight he would have expected a smile and a nod. In the background, on the tape, Charlie heard a sound that startled him. It confused him. Ginger's father continued, "Not to mention matters of perhaps intercepting a bomber headed for the

United States, or one of our military bases in Europe. So it was crucial work. He headed—this fellow I'm speaking of—he ran the team that was in charge of the final assembling of the controls display. In their lab, they wore masks and caps and gowns to keep their hair or skin off their work. They wore gloves, of course, and the lab was immaculate. One speck of dirt, as I understood it, and some gizmo might go haywire. Boom! Millions of dollars and a human life: just ashes. So he was, not surprisingly, a very nervous man. He trembled, he said, except when he was on the job. I remember saying to him, 'You had best love your work, then.' The poor guy. We were writing a contract proposal for the company, and he was among the technicians' representatives in my office one morning. We were talking about wages. It was amicable, systematic, slow. This was quite a while ago. This was almost twenty years ago, my God. He sat there, shaking and pale, watching everything. He had enor-

mous brown eyes, I remember. He was like a great big spaniel or a retriever. He watched and he watched.

"And, all of a sudden, he sat up. He'd been slouched, looking tired, just pressing his fingers on my desk top, watching. Then he sat *straight* up and rubbed his fingertips together. The expression on his face was one of horror. I'm sure you can guess it. They don't call them dusty lawyers' offices for nothing, after all." Ginger's father paused. Charlie nodded and smiled, as if they sat in the light. "His fingers were covered with *dust*, you see. The enemy!"

Ginger's mother said, "There!" Her father's taped voice in the background paused, as the voices alive on the porch did, and then the tape-recorded voice of Ginger's father said, "The enemy!"

"This thing takes forever to rewind," Ginger's mother complained. But Charlie was thinking that the sound he had heard a few moments ago, preserved in the muted chatter

and mechanical grating of the buttons, was his own voice. It had spoken a syllable, now long past in the to-ing and fro-ing of the tape—a fragment of his daughter Aida's name—and he could not avoid imagining that his daughters might listen to this same broken voice on a porch in a future night, when Ginger was absent, and he was, too, and when a rare pattern of planets would have reappeared to goggle from the dark.

A button clicked and the tape recorder stopped. They sat in the darkness. Ginger's mother cleared her throat. Charlie thought of his daughters thinking of him, and then, like a delicate moth settling, a hand that reached from the darkness stroked the back of Charlie's hand. It was a tentative touch, and the hand was very light and very little—his mother-in-law's. She offered the softest caress. Charlie waited for more. But the small hand withdrew. Ginger yawned, and her father spoke of sleep.

—FREDERICK BUSCH



A REPORTER AT LARGE

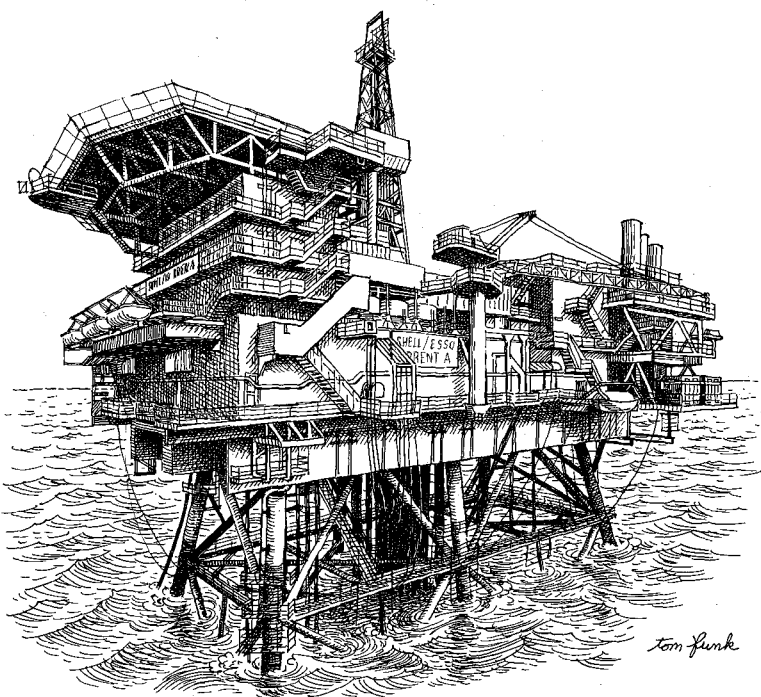
OFFSHORE—I

THE clock radio by my bed in the Altens Skean Dhu Hotel, near Aberdeen's Dyce Airport, had a digital readout and as many buttons as a Japanese stereo set, but the alarm failed to go off at five-thirty. I woke in a panic at six, and when I reached the lobby, ten minutes later, David Betts, a tall, pale young man from the Shell public-relations department, who was to go with me on a three-hundred-mile trip to the Brent oil field, was pacing up and down in front of the reception desk. When we

climbed into a taxi outside, his colleague, Gill Burnside, was peering closely at her watch, but she smiled brightly and said, "There's no hurry." The taxi took off like a racing car.

By six-twenty, Dyce Airport was packed with scruffy, hard-looking men wearing quilted jackets and toting duffelbags. None of them seemed to be over forty, and most looked a great deal younger. They made me feel old and tired and inadequate; they made me wish I had at least had time for a cup of coffee. A pleasant Scots voice on the P.A. system announced departures for London, Amsterdam, Bergen, Sumburgh, Norwich. On the far side of the airfield, in front of the white beehive of the world's busiest heliport, lines of choppers, rotors whirring, queued up for takeoff: Pumas and Sikorsky S-61s in the red-white-and-blue livery of the Bristow Company; huge British Airways Chinooks. Between six and eight in the morning, there seems to be more activity at Dyce Airport than anywhere else in Scotland.

The oil fields in the southern and central parts of the North Sea are within range of medium-sized helicopters, but there are only two ways of reaching those in the north: either direct, by one of the new long-range commercial helicopter services, or by flying in a fixed-wing aircraft to Sumburgh Airport, on the southern tip of Shetland, then on by a Sikorsky



S-61 or another helicopter of that size. This was to be our route on a March Monday morning in 1983. Our plane was an old Viscount with narrow seats and big oval windows—a relic from the days when flying was thought to be glamorous and the view to be part of the pleasure. We flew east over the granite terraces of Aberdeen until we were just off the coast, and then swung slowly north. To the east, toward Scandinavia, the sun was clear above a blue-gray sea flecked with white. Below us, a strip of beach curved north toward Peterhead. Beyond the beach was an elaborate patchwork of fields—squares and triangles and polygons, the rich Grampian farmland where the famous Aberdeen Angus cattle are reared. Immediately ahead of us, a great wall of cloud luminous with sunlight veered up like a mountain range. Within ten minutes, it had swallowed us. The stewardesses brought coffee in plastic cups, the "NO SMOKING" sign was switched off, and the world began to seem tolerable. When we emerged briefly from the clouds, half an hour later, the sea was a dim gray sheet and there was no sign of land.

Gill Burnside, the young woman from Shell, had dark hair, lively dark eyes, and, unlike the rest of us, an expensive suntan, since she had just returned from her honeymoon in the West Indies. She was also the only woman passenger on board, and the

stewardesses did not register her presence. Each time they addressed the passengers, they said "Gentlemen," and each time Gill's eyebrows contracted irritably. Finally, one of the stewardesses realized her mistake and came to apologize. She leaned confidentially over the seat and patted Gill's shoulder. "We never get women on this flight," she said. She seemed professionally embarrassed but privately suspicious.

Across the aisle from me was a squat, knotted young man with a headful of

ginger curls and the letters "L," "O," "V," and "E" tattooed on the first joints of the fingers of his left hand. According to the prison code, he should have had "H," "A," "T," and "E" on the right hand, but when he eventually brought his hands together to roll a cigarette I saw the name of a girlfriend: "B," "A," "B," "S." The paperback he was reading had on its cover a girl with flowing black hair and wearing a flowing white dress outlined against a stormy sky.

We droned along in unbroken cloud for an hour and emerged only when we were a couple of hundred feet above the waves, with the lights of the Sumburgh runway directly ahead of us. The Shetland archipelago is shaped like a dagger pointing down toward Britain, and the airport is at its southernmost tip. The building is modern, bright, larger than the airport buildings of most British provincial cities, and almost totally deserted. It was planned in the mid-nineteen-seventies to cope with the flood of technicians and construction men who passed through when work in the East Shetland Basin was at its peak. But by 1978, when the bulldozers moved in to clear the site and extend the runways of the old airport, the first stage in the construction of the offshore installations had been completed and the world was in recession. By the time the glimmering twenty-five-million-dollar terminal was opened, in 1979, it

was redundant. Yet it was supposed to pay for itself. Since the terminal had been built with government money for the convenience of the oil industry, it seemed logical that the industry should be made to foot the bill, so the government instructed the airport operators, the Civil Aviation Authority, to recoup the cost through landing charges. The more the traffic fell, the higher the landing charges spiralled. By 1980, it was ten times as expensive per passenger to land a charter aircraft at Sumburgh as it was at Aberdeen.

It is not in the nature of international oil companies to take kindly to the role of captive clientele. They protested politely, and then more strenuously, but when it became obvious that their complaints were being ignored they began to investigate the possibility of direct helicopter flights from Aberdeen to the northern field. Shell, for instance, approached British Airways, which approached Boeing Vertol, which modified its big CH-47 Chinook military helicopters for civilian use. The Chinooks can ferry forty-four passengers direct from Aberdeen in airliner comfort—piped music and a steward to bring the coffee—and then, if necessary, return to Aberdeen without refuelling, or divert to Bergen, or even Paris. Half the changes of Shell's crew at the northern fields were soon made by Chinook to and from Aberdeen. Other oil companies were increasingly flying direct as well, and within four years of being opened Sumburgh Airport had become obsolete.

The main concourse is as big as a basketball field house, empty, echoing, white. We queued up for pink helicopter-boarding passes, then waited in small glum groups, perking up only to attend to the voice over the P.A. system. The atmosphere was still early-morning—liverish and surly. When our flight was finally called, we queued again while customs officers sifted like gold prospectors through each piece of luggage. They were searching not just for the usual firearms and bombs but for drink and drugs.

The offshore installations are dry, and all the instructions that visitors receive insist, in varying degrees of intensity and usually in capital letters, "NO ALCOHOL OF ANY DESCRIPTION" and "NO DRUGS (except for prescribed medicines)." The reasoning is simple and irrefutable: since life offshore is hard, dangerous, exhausting, and, above all, constricted, anything that might disturb the fragile balance and set men against one another must be strictly forbidden. A person caught with a bottle is sent back immediately to the mainland—"the beach"—and is thereafter banned from work in the North Sea. The companies take this regulation so seriously that no one is allowed even to begin the journey if he shows signs of intoxication. In August of 1978, there was so much activity in the Brent field that Shell hired a Swedish cruise ship, the Stena Germanica (known affectionately as the Screaming Geranium), to ferry workers out from Aberdeen. Although the journey took twelve hours, anyone who walked up the gangway drunk was sent back ashore to sober up.

The customs men at Sumburgh were efficient and friendly. They smiled a good deal and tried to make conversation, but this only increased the general surliness. The baggage search is the passengers' farewell to freedom; it marks the beginning of a

constrained and regulated life. The atmosphere reminded me of the special train back to boarding school when I was a child: a mixture of apprehension, resentment, and gloom.

Beyond the customs desk was a small room with benches around three walls. Along the fourth wall was a counter behind which were hung rows of bright-orange survival suits. The man in charge of them sized up each passenger critically. "Small," he said to me, and heaved a suit across the counter. It was surprisingly heavy. I took off my shoes, struggled into it with difficulty, and put my shoes back on while a bored official explained to us what to do in an emergency. The suit, stiff and rubber-lined, was equipped with a bewildering assortment of zips and flaps. The bottoms of the sleeves were turned back, and cumbersome rubber gloves attached to them were tucked into flaps at the shoulders. On the right shoulder, like an epaulet, was a strobe light, which was supposed to be stuck into the hood in the event of ditching; I ran out of breath before I managed to reach across and release it. I tied a life belt around my waist and kept the suit unzipped as low as possible to avoid suffocation. Outside the window, a helicopter squatted on the tarmac, its rotors whirring.

When the flight was finally called,



"Let's not spoil this moment with words."



ten of us scurried out with our luggage, moving awkwardly in our unwieldy suits. The downdraft of the roaring blades seemed to be trying to crush us into the ground. The helicopter was a red-white-and-blue Sikorsky S-61, with the operator's name, Bristow, modestly in white on the red. The ground crew dumped our bags into a tail compartment, checked to see that our seat belts were fastened, slammed the cabin door, and scattered. The din of the engine and the rotors increased almost to the threshold of pain, and the aircraft trembled slightly, as though preparing for a feat of strength. It suddenly rose straight up, like a creature set free from chains, hovered ten feet above the ground, dipped its nose as gracefully as a ballerina curtsying to her audience, swooped briefly forward, then sailed up over a small headland toward the misty sea. Patches of sunlight faded quickly as we climbed into cloud.

One of the first partnerships to ex-

plore the region to which we were headed—north and east of Shetland—was that of Shell and Esso. All of Shell-Esso's extensive operations in the North Sea are run by a division of Shell known as Shell Exploration and Production, or Shell Expro. Because I had never been in a helicopter, Captain John Hopson, Shell Expro's head of aircraft services at Aberdeen, had arranged for me to fly in the jump seat between the two Bristow pilots. Hopson once flew for the British Navy, and he looks the part: tall and athletic, with graying hair that makes him seem distinguished rather than old, and clothes as immaculate as a dress uniform—sharply tailored blue blazer, gray flannels with creases like swords, candy-striped shirt, white collar, club tie. He joined the Fleet Air Arm at seventeen, learned to fly fixed-wing aircraft, switched to helicopters, then joined Shell as a pilot in Brunei, the only place in all of Shell's worldwide operations where the company flies

and maintains its own helicopters instead of contracting them from outside companies. In 1980, Shell brought Hopson back to Britain to supervise its North Sea operations. When I met him in Aberdeen, I asked him if helicopters were much harder to fly than conventional aircraft, and discovered that that is like asking a tennis pro if the backhand is harder than the forehand.

He answered patiently, "It's just a question of technique. Certainly there are more things to concern yourself with when you are flying a chopper—more things going round. So learning is more difficult. If two pilots were going through initial training, one on a fixed-wing aircraft and the other on a chopper, and they compared notes, it would be reasonable to say that the helicopter was more difficult. But once you're flying professionally there's no real

extra difficulty. The basic difference is that a fixed-wing aircraft is inherently stable. With all the modern electronics—the automatic pilots and flight-control systems—you can fly a fixed-wing virtually without touching the controls at all. You get it airborne, trim it out, and take your hands off, and the thing will just go on flying until the engine runs out. If you take your hands off the controls of a Sikorsky or one of those little Bells, you crash and burn. You see, a helicopter is basically an unstable platform. So the electronic flight-control systems and automatics are far more complex and expensive than those for a fixed-wing aircraft. Consequently, they have been slow to arrive, although they are coming in now; there are a lot of modern helicopters that are pretty well hands-off from takeoff—theoretically, at least. With the older designs, though, you have to fly them all the time. So it's more demanding physically, and the speed at which the brain

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ances is probably higher in a chopper than in a fixed-wing. But you get used to anything. Anyway, the difficulty is part of the satisfaction. I used to think I was very lucky to earn a salary doing something I enjoyed so much. Of course, it's demanding, but for me it was also a very emotional job. The passenger may think that flying from A to B is utterly boring, but when you are at the controls the simplest things can stir you up: things like flying above cloud on a moonlit night, or seeing the runway lights appear through the fog, just where they should be, at the bottom of an instrument-landing approach—seeing them there and knowing you're all set up beautifully. There's a tremendous satisfaction in that. If you've ever read Saint-Exupéry, you'll know what I mean. I suppose flying is a very selfish profession: you get magnificent feelings from it."

I asked him how hard it had been to change from flying to office work.

He answered, "You miss it when you stop, so you have to try to develop similar feelings about other things, such as bits of paper. But there's a challenge in doing any job properly. When I first came here, I had great ideas of flying every second week and keeping my hand in. But when you come down to it, it's not possible to stay current as a professional once you stop flying as a way of life. Unless you fly every day, or so many hours a week, you're just playing at it. You lose confidence, and after a while the desire to get airborne goes away. I found that even when I was a professional. In the periods when, for one reason or another, there's not much flying, and the pilots aren't being used as they should be, you're quite content lounging around the crew room. Then, when someone comes and says, 'Go and fly,' you think, Why should I? I'm very happy sitting here reading *Playboy*. Yet as soon as you start flying busily again you know that the last thing you really want to do is sit around in the crew room and secretly you've just been waiting to get airborne."

Captain Hopson laughed briefly, self-deprecatingly, as though to distance himself from youthful folly. It was a reaction I was to encounter often in the oilmen I met, both onshore and off. A giant company like Shell, with an annual budget, technical resources, manpower, and a merchant fleet larger than those of many small nations, demands of its employees an allegiance akin to patriotism.



They are required to change homes, towns, countries without argument, to switch jobs and work at the new one in a new place with the same unflagging intensity. They are also required to keep their pleasures and dissatisfactions to themselves. Ric Charlton, for example, at that time director of operations for the whole of Shell's North Sea operations, is a tall, restless Australian with a mottled complexion, uneven teeth, a boxer's bridgeless nose, and a rangy physique. He trained in Holland and has since worked for Shell all over the world—in Nigeria, Kuwait, Trinidad, Brunei, as well as in Britain and his native Australia. He calls himself "the classic oil-field gypsy" and says, "Home is where I hang my hat. I had been seventeen years in the international oil business before I went back to work in Australia, my own country. And I probably felt more of a stranger there than I do here in Aberdeen. One fits in. And unless one does, one quits. I won't survive as an oilman unless I can move to Nigeria or Brunei and handle the minor irritations you get in places like that and find satisfaction in the work. It's a process of self-selection."

Perhaps that is why so many of the people employed in the North Sea oil fields are ex-servicemen, used to obeying orders.

Both pilots of the Sikorsky from Sumburgh had learned to fly in the Royal Air Force before they joined Bristow. Because of the noise of the engine and the rotors, they and I could communicate only through headphones and a microphone, like a black drinking straw, fixed in front of the mouth. I listened while they exchanged information from the duplicate displays of instruments before them, checking pitch, yaw, airspeed, engine speed, altitude, and compass readings as we went up through the clouds to three thousand feet, then slowly descended until we were cruising in the sunlight at two thousand feet, just above a bumpy sea of cloud. When I squeezed into the jump seat, they had introduced themselves, but only by their first names, as though they had too much on their minds to bother with unnecessary details. The chief pilot's name was Geoff, the second pilot's was Martin. Both of them had tired faces; Geoff's hair was gray. He told me he had been flying helicop-



"Wow! What a day to be a workaholic!"

ters for eighteen years and was about to retire. "Enough is enough," he said. "I'm going to buy myself a little shop somewhere. You know, a village store. The quiet life."

I shouted, over the din of the engines, that I thought he would be bored.

"Yes, well, I don't exactly see myself sitting behind a counter all day," he said. Then he turned his attention back to a small radar screen at the center of the instrument console. The beam swung monotonously backward and forward, leaving a smear of buttery light.

A few minutes later, he said, "Gliding. That's what I'd really like to do in my spare time."

"Right," said Martin. "Me, too."

"All that silence."

"Right."

Yet, despite the noise and vibration, it was curiously peaceful up there above the clouds in the pale spring sunlight. We had left Shetland behind us, and the neighboring island of Unst, which has the northernmost airstrip and radio station in the British Isles, and now we were heading northeast, toward the middle of the North Sea and the sixty-first parallel, the same latitude as Anchorage. While Martin watched the instruments, Geoff talked in a desultory way about flying helicopters. "Nothing to

it," he said. "Provided you pay attention." He told me that the only time you used maximum torque was on lift-off and landing. "All you need is a bit of wind," he said laconically. "It's easier to land on an installation in a fifty-mile-an-hour wind than in a dead calm. No wind, no lift, see?"

"If you say so," I answered.

Above the radar screen was a small illuminated chart on which our progress was tracked automatically. We came in through the "gateway" of the radio beacons at the southwest edge of the northern oil fields, but below us there was only cloud. Our destination was Treasure Finder, a mobile accommodation rig, or flotel, moored at that time alongside Brent Delta, one of four fixed drilling platforms—the others are Alpha, Bravo, Charlie—that make up Shell-Esso's Brent field. (All of Shell-Esso's North Sea oil fields are named after seabirds; the others are Auk, Cormorant, Dunlin, Eider, Fulmar, Gannet, and Tern.) As we approached, we lost height steadily, searching for clear air, but the cloud merged into fog and showed no sign of lifting. The pinhead of light on the chart showed that we were getting very close. Geoff had throttled back the engines, and he moved the aircraft forward and downward cautiously, as though groping down a darkened staircase. At

seemed enormous, with the waves beating around its huge concrete legs. Far above, from the top of its gas-flare tower, a great, flowing rag of flame poured out into the fog. Martin said, "Thank Christ." Geoff merely grunted. The radio chatter increased to a grand, incomprehensible finale, like a flock of bickering seabirds. We curved upward three hundred feet, circled Brent Delta, giving the gas flare a wide berth, then dropped gently down to the helideck of Treasure Finder. We were the last flight to make it that morning.

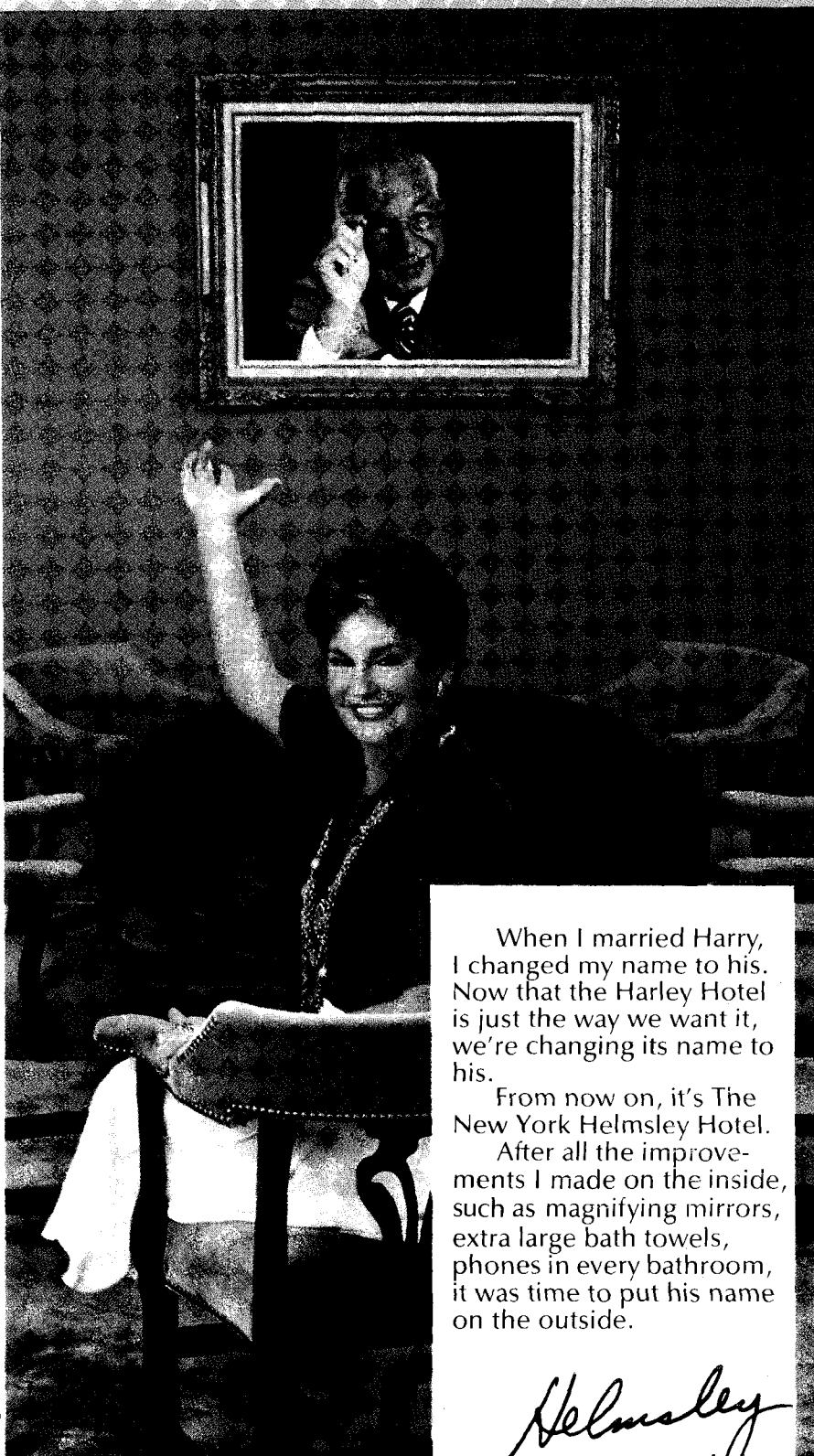
THE first thing you do when you arrive on any offshore installation is arrange how to get off it again in an emergency. Lugging your bag, you scurry down flights of metal steps, following signs to "Admin," a small, crowded room with a high counter, where you hand your pink boarding pass—which doubles as a "Passenger on Board" voucher—to the administration-office clerk. The clerk, who invariably seems to be the most even-tempered man on board, gives you in return a strip of colored cardboard with your name on it and tells you the number of your cabin and your lifeboat station. You struggle out of your survival suit, go to your lifeboat station, and slide the cardboard strip into a slot on a wooden board. When an alarm

sounds, everyone on board reports immediately to his lifeboat station, removes his name from the board, and puts his life jacket on. When all the boards are clear, everyone has been safely mustered, and the installation is ready to be evacuated. It is a simple and logical procedure, but not one that encourages optimism about life out in the North Sea.

Treasure Finder, the flotel for the Brent field, owned by the Norwegian shipping company Wilhelm Wilhelmsen, was converted from an oil rig, and is contracted to Shell Expro. In construction, it is an Aker H-3 semi-submersible: a gigantic catamaran—a coffee table as big as a football field and four stories high, mounted on two submarines. The accommodation is arranged in three decks: two-berth and four-berth cabins for five hundred men, a big mess hall, a coffee shop that is open round the clock, a cinema and two smaller TV rooms, a little gymnasium, separate rest area and coffee room for the field's helicopter pilots (there are eight of them, and they are all based on Treasure Finder), a corridor of offices, a radio room, a machinery room and various workshops and stores, and a glass-fronted box, a sort of foreshortened ship's bridge, where the captain steers the vessel when it is under way. There is also a bonded store, known as the bond, for duty-free goods—tobacco, after-shave, perfume for the wife. Built on the top of all this are two helidecks and a hangar, which in a pinch can house five helicopters and is painted on the outside in yellow-and-black stripes, like a wasp. On either side of this upper deck is a pair of huge cranes for unloading the supply boats.

In bad weather, the journey from the helicopter to the administration office can be exciting. The helideck is covered with a rope mesh, which provides something to grab onto if a sudden gust of wind blows you off your feet. Even in calm weather, the noise is battering: the din of the chopper, the slosh of the waves around the huge legs of the adjacent installation, the roaring of its power generators and of its massed machinery as the oil is pumped and processed, the clank and thump from the drilling floor, water gushing from pipes high above the sea, the gas flare howling off into the murk. And over all this chaos, on that first morning, every thirty seconds there came three long, melancholy blasts from the foghorn, the navigational signal

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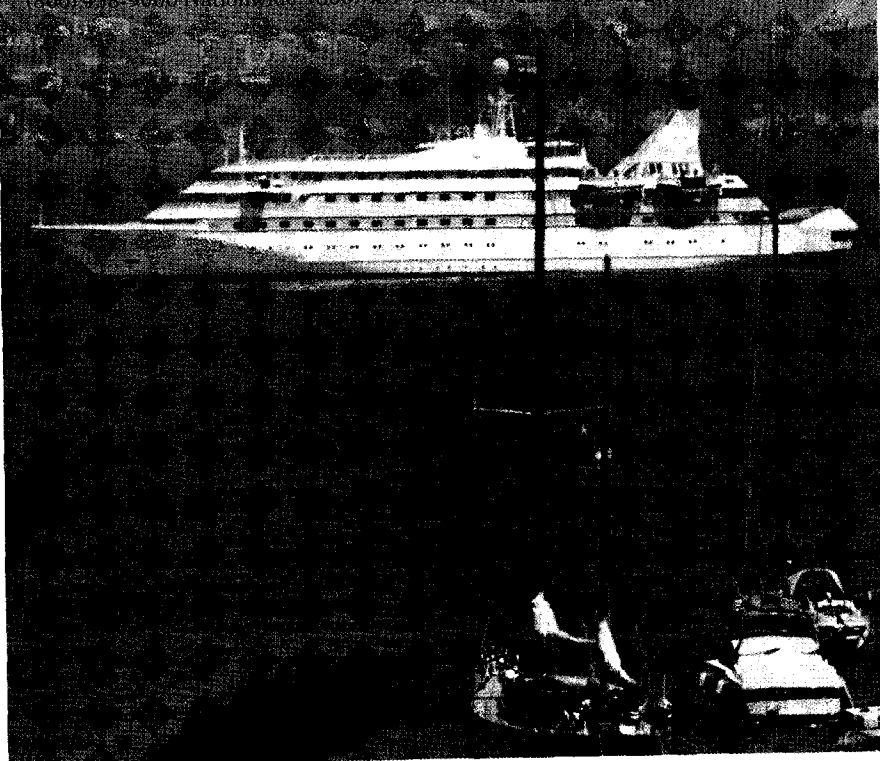
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Belowdecks is calmer but never silent. The roar of generators becomes the discreet hum of air-conditioning, and there is a continuous, subdued, hollow din of people moving around what is, however cunningly disguised, a steel structure. But the corridors are wide and rubber-carpeted, and almost everyone wears slippers, since work boots are forbidden in the living quarters. In the cabins, the metal doors and shelves are painted to look like wood, and most of the other surfaces are a yellowish buff that might also be wood. The cabins are designed to get the maximum use out of the minimum space. On the left of the door is a hanging place for the general-issue work clothes—orange overalls, round-toed leather knee boots, yellow hard hat emblazoned with the Shell emblem. Next to that are two long, padlocked clothes cupboards, a door to the shower-lavatory, which is shared with the adjacent cabin, a recessed sink with a mirror above it. At the end of the cabin, beneath a square window with a closeup view of a metal wall, is a small table. On the wall to its right are a reading light, a thermostat, a shelf and two chairs, side by side, then two wide, comfortable bunks, one above the other, each with its own strip light and thick, brown-striped curtains; below the bunks are four long, deep drawers. In the ceiling are a fluorescent tube and a big ventilation slot. With the door shut, the only sounds are the hum of the air-conditioning and the far-off, intermittent foghorn.

I unpacked my bag and joined the two young people from Shell's public-relations department for a tour of the vessel. It turned out to be less a tour than a royal progress. Gill Burnside, with her dark hair, dark eyes, and bright face, would be a remarkably attractive woman in any gathering. Out here in the middle of the North Sea, she brought the place to a standstill. It was like following Helen around the ramparts of Troy. At the door of the main changing room, a man struggling wearily out of his overalls paused, crucified, arms half in, half out of his sleeves. Someone dropped his boots to the floor and whispered "Blimey." Someone stuck his head out of his cabin, opened his mouth to call a friend, and was unable to get out a word. An older man with short steel-gray hair took off his glasses, polished them vigorously on his sweater, put them back on, and shook his head. There were no bawdy

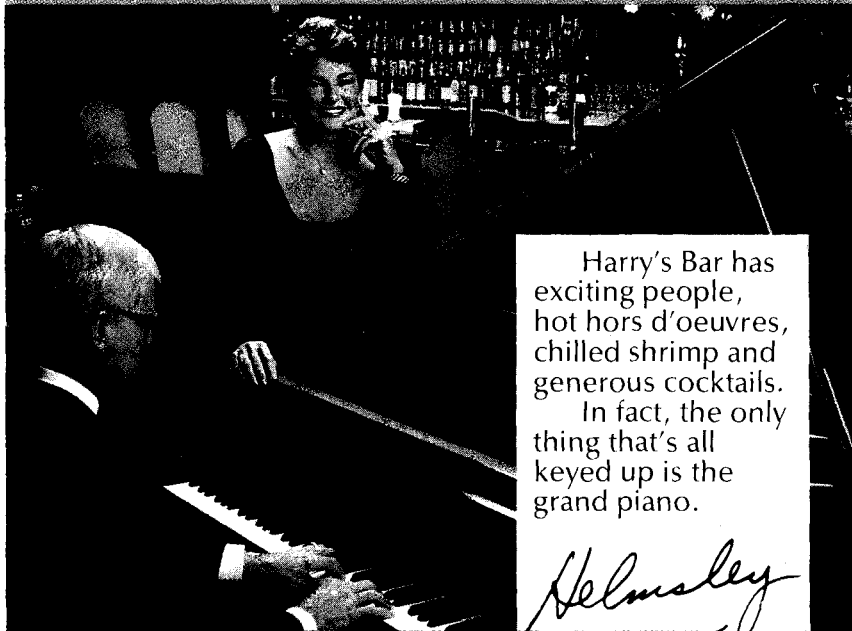
comments, no wolf whistles—only a wave of incredulous silence, as though the men were overwhelmed by this dazzling reminder of a life elsewhere. When we three finally went into the mess for lunch, Gill collected her food, marched ahead of David Betts and me to a table in the farthest corner, and sat with her back firmly to the room. "I couldn't eat if I had to face them," she said.

In another place, she might have been embarrassed or irritated; here she was simply disconcerted. The effect she had—the gaping, the stunned silence—was not lustful, or even particularly personal; it was, instead, a mixture of wistfulness and fatigue. Fatigue because work on an offshore installation is unrelenting. The regular, basic shift is from six o'clock to six o'clock, and it is worked with a minimum of breaks. "It costs three hundred million pounds to build one of these things and seventy-five pounds a day to keep a man out here, not counting his wages and his flight from the beach," an engineer told me. "So you don't want to see it all come to a halt while six men take a tea break." The cycle is monotonous and unforgiving: up at five, eat, work, eat, work, eat. By the end of the minimum twelve-hour day—or night, depending on the shift—no one has the energy for anything more taxing than a game of billiards or a movie before bed. The atmosphere in the rest areas is friendly but drained. Twelve hours a day for fourteen straight days equals a hundred and sixty-eight hours' work (it is often nearer two hundred)—the equivalent of over four normal forty-hour weeks compressed into a fortnight.

As for the wistfulness, workers in the North Sea oil fields earn high wages, but they pay for them with their private lives, and Gill Burnside's presence on board seemed to remind them of what they were missing. Depending on the company that employs them, workers spend, at best, half their time away from their families. Shell employees are the luckiest: a statistical survey the company made revealed that a high proportion of accidents occurred after the workers had been in the field for ten days; as a result, Shell now rotates its men in one-week cycles. Most of the other oil companies and subcontractors work on a fortnightly turnaround—two weeks in the field, two weeks at home—and a few work three weeks offshore, one week onshore. Because of the complexities of saturation diving, the divers work

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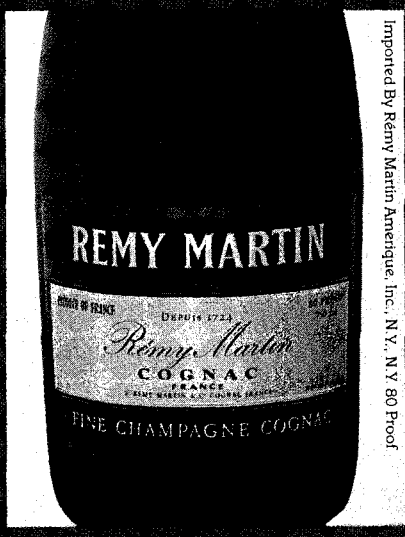
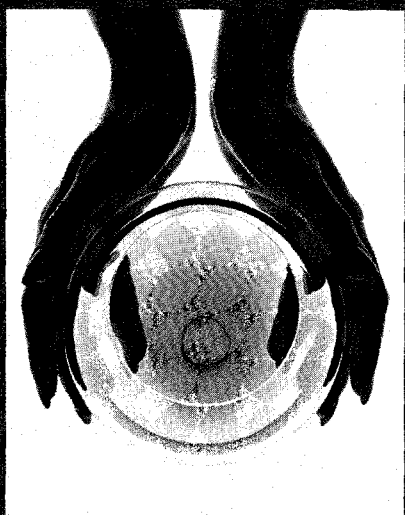
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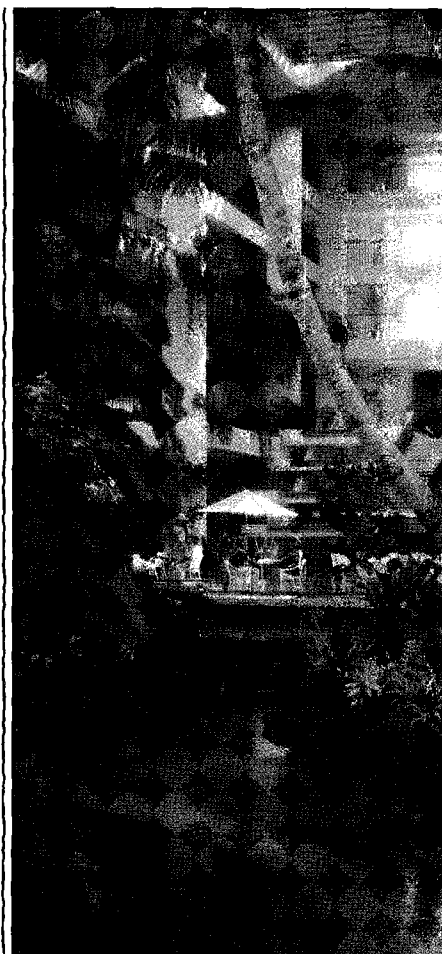
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for four weeks, then have four weeks off; but in this, as in everything else, the divers are special.

Intense work combined with an intense desire to get home makes men stir-crazy. "If you share a cabin with a man who clicks his finger joints while he reads in bed, you end up wanting to kill him," a welder told me. "Shell is right to do a week on, a week off. Two weeks out here is too long."

The reaction to this off-on life varies according to the worker's background. For those who come to the oil industry from the armed services, the North Sea is a soft option: the food is better and the comfort is greater, and they get home to see their families regularly instead of being away for months on end. One man told me that he had left the Merchant Navy for a job with Shell in order to be around while his children were growing up. No matter that he saw them only alternate weeks; he had previously counted himself lucky to be with them more than a few weeks a year.

Ex-servicemen form the nucleus of the North Sea establishment: they run the installations and fly the helicopters. The general work force is different, and fits less snugly into the scheme of things. Many of the workers have come offshore from Britain's declining industrial regions. The factories where they once worked have gone bust, and they have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. So they come out to the North Sea grudgingly, as a last resort, because the work is there and pays well. Kenneth Murray, a former Merchant Navy sailor who is now the offshore-installation supervisor of Brent Alpha, described what happens: "When a man comes out here, he's got to change his whole way of life and his whole way of thinking. He's probably been used to working shifts in, say, a steelworks. After work, he goes to the pub with his mates, on Saturdays he goes to a football match, on Sundays he can forget about everything. But out here he's working twelve hours a day for fourteen days on end. No drink, no wife, and if he comes out to do a specialized job probably no mates, either. If he's part of the general work force—a construction hand or a plater or a welder or a pipefitter—then he's not part of a regular team like we have here on Brent Alpha, he's just one of five hundred blokes on Treasure Finder. So he's called out at five to eat his breakfast and catch the shuttle to work. Well, in winter it's not very pleasant



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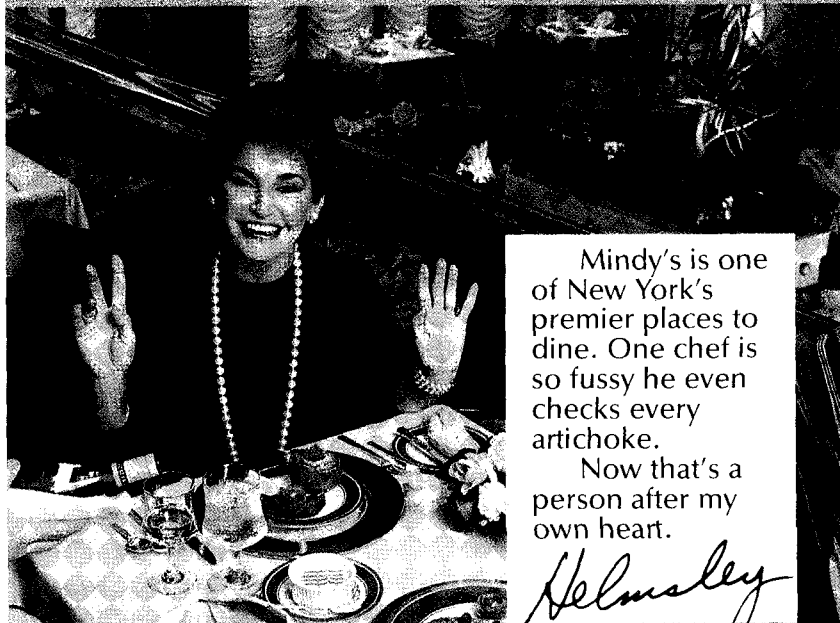
getting on a helicopter in the dark at six in the morning, with Treasure Finder rolling around and wind blowing snow in your face. You're in an alien environment and a long way from home."

It may be that an alien environment is just what some of the men are looking for. They choose to work offshore because their lives back on the beach no longer make sense to them. The cold, the exhaustion, the wild weather, and the underlying sense of danger that goes with moving around continually in helicopters are a release, an objective correlative for their uneasiness. "You'd be surprised how many men come out here to get away from their wives," I was told. "You'd also be surprised how many marriages fail after the husbands go offshore." An operations officer working for Bristow told me that at one point half the helicopter pilots on Treasure Finder were divorced and one was separated. He said, "You count two weeks out of every four as lost time, and try to pack four weeks of living into two weeks at home. So it's no place for the newlywed. The first year or two of marriage is hard enough wherever you are. Working out here could make it impossible. The young wife is left on her own to cope with everything: the babies, the house, the loneliness. She gets exhausted, then depressed, then she goes home to mother. On the other hand, if a marriage is really solid it tends to prosper. If the kids are old enough to be at school and the wife has work and interests of her own, both she and her husband appreciate the time out to get on with their own lives. It makes them both independent, and means they can enjoy each other's company more, because they are not always living in each other's pockets. Even so, crises at home—the child breaks an arm or the roof springs a leak—nearly always occur just after the husband has gone offshore."

Whatever the men's backgrounds, life on a North Sea oil installation is constricting and unnatural, and no one needed Gill Burnside to remind him of the world elsewhere. And Gill, who had merely come to look, so as to be better informed about her work when she got back to her desk in Aberdeen, was finding the situation increasingly oppressive. We ate in silence, and when we finished she walked out of the mess with her eyes down and her shoulders hunched defensively. The foghorn was still booming as we climbed the dank steel steps back to the

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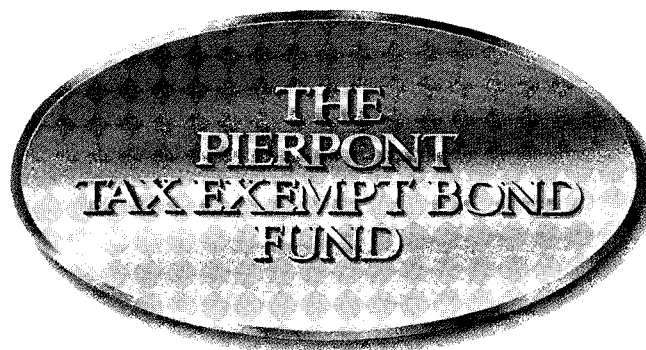
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upper deck. "If it doesna lift, we'll nae get back tonight," Gill said gloomily.

She and Betts and I went for coffee to the office of Ian McKnight, the offshore-installation supervisor of Treasure Finder—the Shell employee who is ranked below the vessel's Norwegian captain but is ultimately responsible for all company decisions and activities on board. He has a big metal desk to match his rank, but otherwise the office is cramped and permanently busy. The security officer has his desk and files at the end of the room closer to the door. In the no man's land between the desks is Treasure Finder's library: three shelves of a small cupboard between filing cabinets and a short-wave radio, and opposite a constantly replenished coffee machine. The library works on a one-for-one system: you have to leave a book before you can take one. "It's all right if you like science fiction and cowboys," McKnight said. "But anything good gets stolen."

We drank coffee, the foghorn boomed, the gloom thickened. When Gill asked "What happens if we canna get off tonight?" the question hung ominously in the air; there are no single cabins for visitors on Treasure Finder.

"We'll sort something out," McKnight said. McKnight is a bulky man who was just then made bulkier by a large sweater. He wears thick glasses and is a stickler for detail. He worked in the paper trade until the recession of 1975 made him redundant, then joined Shell and came out to the North Sea in 1976, when the installations of the Brent field were under construction. He began as a critical-path-and-methods engineer and went on to do logistics for the engineering side of the project teams—logistics comprising everything from crew changes and matériel to planning. When the main flurry of construction was over, he stayed on as offshore-installation supervisor of Treasure Finder—a job that also requires a considerable talent for logistics, since it involves accommodating and moving around the field a large and constantly changing population of workers, specialists, and visitors from Shell and its many subcontractors. A list of all the people who pass through the flotel each day, the companies they work for, the jobs they are doing, the installations they must be shifted to and from, and the places they will sleep is printed out daily on a sixteen-foot telex sheet that seems to the out-

sider as lengthy and impenetrable as the Dead Sea Scrolls. Despite McKnight's reassurances, Gill did not seem consoled.

I went down to my cabin and stretched out gratefully on one of the bunks. An hour later, I was awakened by a small man with curly reddish hair. "The name's Alex," he said. "Out here to check the copying machines." He dropped his duffelbag on the floor and unpacked swiftly, with the air of someone who knew his way around. I asked him when he had arrived. "Just a few minutes ago," he answered. As though in confirmation, the cabin vibrated slightly and there was the distant roar of a helicopter taking off. Gill Burnside and David Betts would get back at least to Sumburgh that night.

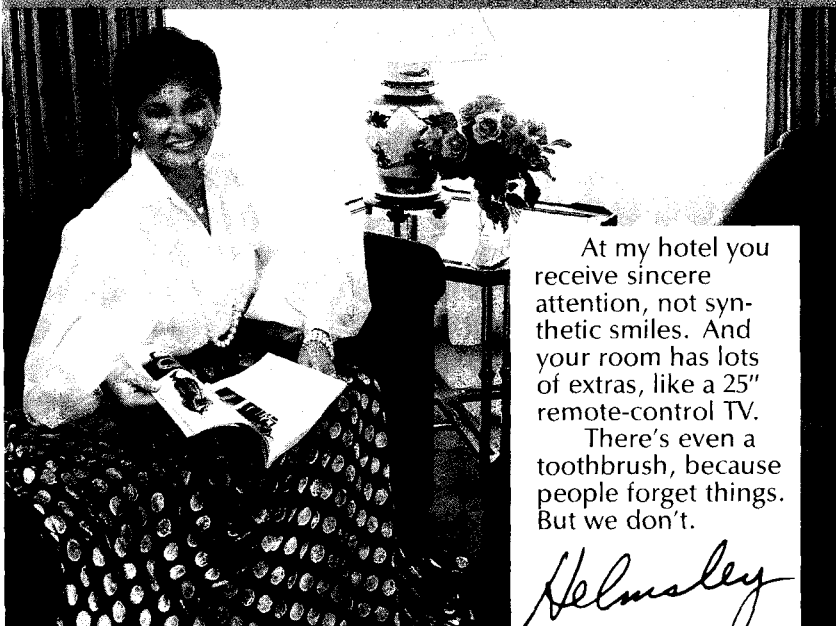
"Three M," Alex said when I asked him which company he worked for. "There's three of us covering Northeast Scotland. This, believe it or not, is part of our beat." He unlaced his shoes. "It's been a long day," he said. "And it's nae over yet. I think I'll take a wee nap." He put his shoes neatly on the floor of his cupboard, climbed into his bunk, and pulled the curtains. He seemed to know that the secret of sharing a cabin with a stranger is to keep the place tidy and the conversation short.

At six o'clock, before going to eat, I went up on deck. Although the mist had thinned, the foghorn was still sounding its melancholy note. Brent Delta loomed over the flotel, lights blazing on half a dozen levels, machinery thumping and humming over the slosh of the waves around its legs. Its flickering gas flare illuminated the scene like a Hieronymus Bosch vision of Hell. A mile or so to the south, Brent Charlie was lit up like a Christmas tree, the banner of gas above it blazing off into the dusk. Beyond it, Brent Bravo was a vague tangle of lights, and on the horizon was an isolated candle of flame from the Brent field's gas vent. Behind was another faint glimmer: the Dunlin platform. Smaller lights moved on the water: the supply ships that bring matériel out from the beach and the standby boats that constantly circle the installations. But the gathering night and the fog reduced every detail to an Impressionist blur.

After dinner, I began what I subsequently discovered was the regular evening ritual of everyone on board: migrating from recreation room to recreation room in search of a movie

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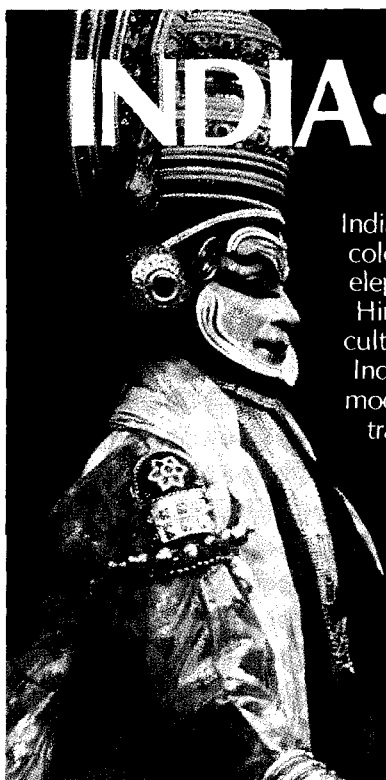
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worth watching. (I finished up with a snow-and-ice James Bond.) At ten o'clock, I went back on deck for a breath of air before bed. The fog had lifted, and the night was cold. The Brent platforms—Charlie, Bravo, Alpha—glittered in a straight line ahead, and in whichever direction I turned were other lights, farther off and less distinct, rising out of the blackness. For the first time, I began to understand the scope of this modern miracle: a network of little towns—built upward instead of spread out—in the midst of one of the most hostile seas on earth, somewhere between a set of lost islands far off the northern tip of Britain and the harsh Norwegian coast.

A door opened behind me, and a wiry little man came out, looked around, zipped his North Cape jacket up to his chin, and began to walk up and down the steel grating of the deck, moving his bent arms horizontally backward and forward and breathing deeply. After three or four turns, he stopped near the rail where I stood and nodded brusquely at the shimmering lights spread around us in the darkness. "You know what that is?" he said, and did not pause for an answer. "That's what keeps the old country solvent." He stretched his arms above his head and touched his toes six times. When he had finished, he said, "That, mate, is the most expensive real estate in Britain." Then he turned smartly on his heels and marched back inside.

IN 1959, when the giant Groningen gas field was discovered on the north coast of the Netherlands, drilling for hydrocarbons in the sea was still in its infancy. The first deep-water rig was used off Louisiana in 1947, and no one had any experience of jack-up rigs and pipelaying at depths greater than two hundred feet. "Around 1960, the North Sea for the oilmen was like the moon for the astronauts," said George Williams, the geologist who headed the Shell operation for Shell-Esso's joint venture in North Sea exploration. The parallel between the North Sea and space has become one of the clichés of the industry. Shell recently ran a series of dramatic advertisements depicting science-fiction structures patrolled by strange spacecraft; the fine print below explained that this was what the oil installations and the pipelaying and submarine vessels would look like if the sea were removed. The message was that there was nothing to choose

between the space program and North Sea oil production in terms of both state-of-the-art technology and expense. Shell-Esso—and there are over forty other operators in the area—reckons that its share of the effort alone has so far cost more than eleven billion dollars. The Brent field itself cost twice what the Anglo-French Concorde project did, but, unlike the Concorde, it coins money. Shell-Esso's average production for 1983 was 682,978 barrels a day at roughly thirty dollars a barrel; in January of 1984, the daily average had risen to 819,317 barrels a day, and it continued to rise through February, to around 920,000 barrels a day. The total daily production figure for the British sector in February of 1984 was two and a half million barrels—worth more than nine hundred dollars a second, according to the *London Times*—and this puts Britain in the first division of the world oil-production league, along with the United States, the Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, and Iran. When the first British oil—from Hamilton Brothers' Argyll field, in the central North Sea—came ashore, in June of 1975, the British national oil bill was eight and a half billion dollars a year. Today, Britain is self-sufficient in oil and receives from its oil and gas fields an annual tax revenue of over twelve billion dollars. Despite its ailing and largely inefficient industries and its slow economic growth, the country now has a regular balance-of-trade surplus because of oil.

Long before the discovery of the Groningen gas field, geologists had surmised that there might be hydrocarbons in the deeper waters farther north, where the gas-bearing formations of Yorkshire dip under the sea to reappear in the gas fields of northwestern Europe. Groningen indicated that the deposits under the sea might be large enough to be commercially profitable, but no drilling was possible until the governments of all the countries around the North Sea—Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, West Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway—had ratified the Convention on the Continental Shelf, setting out which part of the sea belonged to whom. The Convention had been agreed to in principle in 1958 but was not finally ratified until 1964. Although Britain was the last of the countries to ratify, it was one of the first to issue licenses for exploration and production. By then, the oil com-

panies, inspired by the Groningen bonanza, had done a series of seismic surveys of the southern section of the North Sea and were ready to move. Fifty-three licenses were awarded in September of 1964. The first exploration well was spudded in before the end of the year; and twelve months later the first offshore British gas field, West Sole, had been discovered by British Petroleum, soon to be followed by Shell-Esso's strike in the giant Leman gas field. By 1967, West Sole was producing, and the conversion of British houses to natural gas had begun. Virtually all domestic gas in Britain now comes from the North Sea.

Despite the gas finds and a small oil discovery in Danish waters in 1967, not many oilmen seriously believed in the possibility of commercial oil deposits under the North Sea. Two exceptions were Edwin Van den Bark, vice-president of Phillips Petroleum's international department, and George Williams, the managing director of Shell Expro. The gas fields were on the latitude of the English Midlands, between the fifty-third and fifty-fourth parallels, but Van den Bark was convinced that oil would be found farther north, above the fifty-sixth parallel. His enthusiasm and persuasiveness were vindicated by two strikes in the Norwegian section: first, the small Cod field; then, in 1969, the giant Ekofisk. Early in 1970, Amoco struck oil in British waters above the fifty-seventh parallel, and, later that year, two more fields were discovered, in the British sector not far from Ekofisk: Phillips' small Josephine and B.P.'s Forties, another giant. The following year, in the same area, Shell struck oil in the Auk field.

Meanwhile, George Williams, inspired by developments in the geological science of plate tectonics, had become convinced that the real bonanza was to be found much farther north, around the sixty-first parallel. Williams has recently retired as the director general of the United King-

dom Offshore Operators Association, a trade organization for the companies involved in British offshore oil, which provides them with a channel for communicating with the outside world—government, the media—and a forum for internal discussion of their problems. He is a vigorous, ruddy-faced man, now in his sixties and putting on weight around the middle. But even in the sedate Knightsbridge offices of the Offshore Operators Association, where I saw him a few months before his retirement, he moved as though he were holding in with difficulty a great deal of energy. His eyes are clear blue and very steady; his mouth is bitten up and screwed down on the left side but straightens when he smiles. He has a booming, barracks-room laugh. He comes from a farming family in Wiltshire, and when he went up to Cambridge, in 1936, he had no idea what he wanted to study. His tutor suggested geology. "I thought, Well, I've been brought up on a farm—that sounds interesting," he told me. "Then, when I began to think of what I was going to do with my life, I saw geology as a means of seeing the world. Just before I finished my degree, the British Petroleum people offered me a job, but I wasn't attracted by it, because at that time they were only in the Middle East. So I went over to The Hague and was interviewed by Shell, which offered me a post provided I got my degree. Then I thought that perhaps I ought to test the water with another company as well, so I wrote to Burmah Oil, in London. Believe it or not, I got a reply back in forty-eight hours saying, 'Dear Mr. Williams, I was most surprised to get your letter. I thought you were close to finalizing arrangements with Shell.' I thought, Good God, they're the Secret Service—I'd better not try anyone else. So I quickly signed the Shell papers. I got my degree in 1939 and delayed joining Shell, with its blessing, to do a few months' field work—because I'd won a prize of some sort. I was due to go to The Hague on the fifth of September. Well, war was declared on Sunday, the third of September, and at nine o'clock precisely on Monday, the fourth, at my home in Wiltshire, I got a call from Shell's chief personnel director, no less. The conversation went like this: 'Williams, I presume you've heard that war's been declared. Because we know that you'll want to join the services straightaway, the purpose of this call is to tell you that we've



cancelled arrangements for your passage to The Hague tomorrow and to assure you that there's a job for you in Shell as soon as you've won the war.' I was a bit bloody annoyed."

Williams joined the R.A.F., became a pilot, and had what is called "a good war"—so good that when it ended he was tempted to stay in the service. It took him a long time to decide, he said, but when he eventually went to Shell, as an exploration geologist, in 1946, he got all the travel he had originally bargained for as an undergraduate: prospecting in Somaliland, Indonesia, and Libya, broken by spells in The Hague, the United States, and back home. In 1954, he became exploration manager for a joint venture that Shell was undertaking with B.P. in Nigeria. Despite the fact that the companies had been prospecting there on and off without success since 1935, Williams became convinced that there was oil to be found. Not so the Hague office. When he returned to Europe in 1955 with his proposed program for the following year, it was met, he said, "with a great lack of enthusiasm." But that was precisely the kind of challenge he most enjoyed. He returned to Nigeria, having wheedled the money to drill three more wells. Before the year was out, Shell had made its first major strike. Williams moved on to Brunei, where Shell had just begun to explore the offshore waters. "When I arrived, they'd drilled three wells, all dry. We carried on and drilled eighteen more dry holes. Then I came home"—a big laugh—"and presented to the board my case for continuing and had the same problem I'd had with Nigeria. Anyway, I managed to persuade them. We drilled one more dry hole, and in the twenty-third well we struck oil." The Sultan of Brunei, Muda Hassanal Bolkhiah, thanks to his oil revenues, is now one of the richest men in the world, with a palace that covers three hundred acres.

Williams' record in Nigeria and Brunei stood him in good stead when what he called "the third sticky point in my career" arrived: the decision to drill for oil in the northern North Sea—in the East Shetland Basin, around the sixty-first parallel. The expense was enormous, the technology undeveloped, the Shell board doubtful. Added to that, one senior Shell geologist went on record as saying he could find no evidence for source rocks or good reservoirs in the area. "But I was

an enthusiast," Williams told me. "I think everything I've ever been given to do in life I've been enthusiastic about—perhaps because they've been good things to do. In the North Sea, I was fired by the whole project from the start, and then became more and more certain that all the signs were right. Of course, there's an element of luck in oil exploration. Not gambler's luck—simply the luck of being in the right place at the right time and taking advantage of it. The odds are usually against you, so if you're going to be successful in this business you must try to reduce those odds to a minimum. And if they are still too great you must say so and get the hell out. But if you think there's a chance of success you've really got to hammer the table and convince other people."



Williams hammered the table and eventually convinced the Shell board. In 1970, when the British government opened the third round of exploration licensing, the company's geophysicists had analyzed extensive seismic surveys of the East Shetland Basin and discovered what Williams called "very marked geological unconformities at varying depths between six and twelve thousand feet which we hoped would be an unconformity in the Cretaceous-aged rocks." He explained, "In other words, below the unconformity we would run into Lower Cretaceous and Jurassic rocks. If that was the case, we were going to have a suite of rocks down there that would clearly be very good from an oil or gas point of view. However, the unconformity could have marked the boundary between Upper Cretaceous rocks and much older rocks—Devonian, for instance—which would have meant little hope for hydrocarbons. There was no way we could tell until we drilled."

Hydrocarbons—oil, gas, tar—are derived from the slow decomposition of organic matter that was trapped many million years ago in accumulating muds. Their decomposition was encouraged by ever-increasing pressure and temperature as the muds were gradually buried under further sediments. Over the millions of years it takes for hydrocarbons to form, the increasing pressure squeezes them out of the gradually consolidating muds into adjacent, more porous sediments, such as sandstones and limestones. Contrary to popular belief, hydrocarbons do not gather in subterranean caves and then gush to the surface

when a drill breaks through an impermeable caprock holding them in place. Instead, they are usually found in the minute spaces between grains of consolidated reservoir rocks (sandstones and limestones), having migrated to them from the original source rocks—the fine silts or shales from which the hydrocarbons were expelled. Reservoir rocks, which are porous and permeable, consist of a network of interconnected, water-filled pore spaces through which the gas and oil gradually permeate upward. A three-dimensional configuration of reservoir rocks surmounted by a caprock that prevents the hydrocarbons from migrating or escaping is called a trap, and traps occur only in layers of sedimentary rock—as distinct from the two other groups of the earth's rock, the igneous and the metamorphic—which were laid down when the earth's crust was warped downward, usually under seas, sometimes under lakes and estuaries, to form sedimentary basins.

Source rocks, reservoir rocks, caprocks, a trap, and a sequence of geological events which produces these four features at the right time and in the right place are the basic geological pieces in the jigsaw puzzle of oil exploration: Is there any indication of oil? Is it mature? Where are the source rocks? Where could it have been generated? Where might it have migrated to? Geologists obtain the preliminary answers to these questions from seismic surveys: acoustic shock waves are passed through the strata and are reflected from the various layers of rock; their times of travel are measured by recording instruments, and, from the readings, pictures of the underlying formations are produced; from these, it is possible to make an educated guess about the presence of oil or gas. If the signs are right, you are in what oilmen call an exploration play. But the only way to be certain is to drill.

In the early days, before petroleum engineers knew how to control the flow from a new well, the classic indication of a strike was the gusher—a great, unstoppable fountain of oil that roared into the air and flooded the surrounding countryside. In "The Wildcatters," a history of early American oil exploration, Samuel W. Tait described what happened in 1910 when the Lake View well, on the east side of the Coalinga field, in California, blew out:

With a roar of gas that could be heard miles away came a cloud of oil whose particles carried for two-and-a-half



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miles... Dusty [Charles L. Woods, the foreman] paid high wages to college boys, convicts and anybody else who cared to help pile up sand bags around 75,000 barrel sumps. Outside the sumps, which were filled as fast as they were completed, he walled up a sixteen-acre area which he named the "Cornfield." One of California's unprecedented earthquakes cracked open three sumps and let oil into this. To prevent the late summer floods from taking out the confined oil, he led six hundred men back to the hills and dammed up the mouths of canyons with walls twenty feet high and fifty feet wide. Nine-tenths of the storage he built was needed before the big well died.

Meanwhile persons were composing a variety of descriptive passages about the Lake View. To one onlooker it was utterly unearthly. "It's hell," he said, "literally... hell. It roars like hell. It mounts, surges and sweeps like hell. It terrifies like hell. It is uncontrollable as hell. It is black and hot as hell." Charley Woods' description was... more pointed. He said the earth had cut an artery.

Today, the signs are a good deal less dramatic. While an exploration hole is being drilled, a chemical compound called mud is pumped down the drill pipe, emerges from holes in the center of the drilling bit, and circulates back up the hole to the surface. The mud has several functions: it lubricates and cools the bit; it lines the walls of the hole, preventing them from caving in, and so making it easier to retrieve the bit; it provides weight to balance the formation pressure encountered during drilling; and, most important, on its journey back to the surface it flushes out the chippings made by the turning bit. Up on the platform, the chippings are filtered out so that the mud can be used again, and are then analyzed for information about the strata penetrated. Sometimes the mud also brings up traces of gas or oil—the first hints of a discovery. The next stage is to run an electric log down the well on a cable in order to measure the resistivity of the rocks. (Since oil is an insulator and salt water a conductor, the resistivity of oil-filled rocks is high.) There are now other, more sophisticated logs: nuclear logs, which bombard the formation with gamma rays; sonic logs, which measure the velocity of sound through it.

George Williams described to me what occurred when Shell, in 1971, drilled its first exploration well in what subsequently became the Brent field: "We had got to around seven thousand feet and were very much on edge to know what would happen when we went through the unconformity. We went on down, and, as we had hoped, somewhere between sev-

en and ten thousand feet we went through into an absolutely marvellous suite of Cretaceous and Jurassic rocks, full of oil. The first indication is your cuttings, but they can be deceptive. It's the logs that show the character and contents of the rocks, and when we saw them we realized that we had a wonderful reservoir. But that presented us with a problem. The government had announced the fourth round of licensing. By that time, we had found other attractive structures in the vicinity, and one of them was Block 211/21, which the government was putting up for auction in a few months' time. Now, because we are a highly competitive industry, we felt it was terribly important that the wide world should not know we'd found oil close by in Brent. So we decided not to carry out a full production test, which would have meant producing the oil and gas and flaring it off—something you could never hide. Instead, we did a Schlumberger formation test to determine the content of the rock. That means you put in a great, long sonde—a sonde being an electronic logging tool that gathers data and sends it back to the surface. This particular sonde had charges up and down its length. When you fire them by remote control, each one shoots a little cone into the rock. The cone then seals itself and is tied automatically with a piece of wire. When you pull the sonde back up, these little sealed capsules come with it, each containing a sample of the rock. You can then analyze what is in the pores. That was when we knew that our greatest hopes had been realized."

With the government auction imminent, it was vital to keep the results hidden even from the drillers on the platform. According to Ric Charlton, apart from senior members of the Shell and Esso boards who had to decide what to bid, only four oilmen knew the potentialities of this first well in the northern North Sea: George Williams, on the spot; "one fellow in The Hague;" Jock Munroe, the base representative in charge of drilling, who flew with the samples from the platform to Aberdeen; and Charlton himself, who was in Lowestoft, on the Norfolk coast opposite Shell's gas fields. "I was petroleum-engineering manager at the time—one of the people responsible for the

evaluation of the wells," Charlton told me when I talked to him in Aberdeen. "I'll never forget seeing those logs and samples. Eight hundred feet of oil-bearing sands! Fantastic! It was like breaking the bank at Monte Carlo. But we kept that well as tight as the proverbial duck's backside. We drilled it, and nobody knew we had made a major discovery. And we sat on it for nine months."

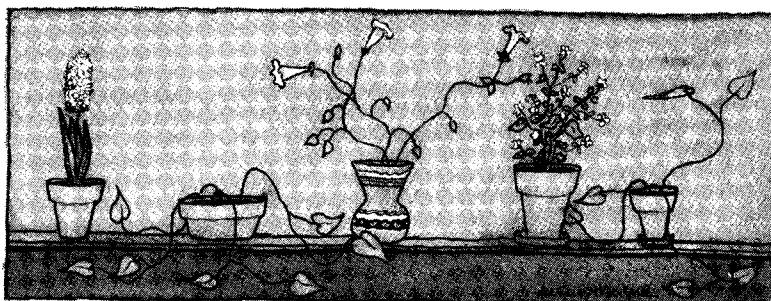
Shell already held a license for the Brent field, but the government had decided that the next round of licensing, which included the nearby Block 211/21, would, for the first time, be an auction by sealed cash bids. "Remember, this was the very first well in the really northern North Sea," Williams said. "And only we knew for sure that it was an oil province with prolific production possibilities. If the others had got wind of it, fantastic amounts would have been bid on Block 211/21. So we kept our secret. But then, along with Esso, we had to decide how much we would bid. There are various techniques for working out the sums, but the key factor was we were absolutely determined to get that block. We knew more than anyone else and could not afford not to take advantage of that. So after long deliberation we decided to bid twenty-one million pounds"—roughly fifty million dollars—"or just a little more." When the bids were opened, it turned out that the next-highest bid was eight million pounds, and that gave the rival companies a good deal of malicious pleasure. "So what?" Charlton said. "So we left thirteen million on the table, and everyone said, 'Ha-ha.' But I still think it was a good figure. If you are going to make a preemptive bid, you might as well *make* it preemptive. Think what we've got in that block: the bulk of Cormorant—a difficult field, but nevertheless more than half a billion barrels of oil in total. What the hell is twenty-one million?"

In the spring of 1972, when the fourth round of licensing was out of the way, and the lid was off its secret,

Shell drilled a second Brent well, which went through the main upper reservoir, and discovered beneath it a second reservoir, equally large. At that time, John Heaney, until recently both the chief executive of Saxon Oil and a fruit farmer in Essex, became the technical director of Shell Expro in the northern North Sea. "My job was to develop the field, to spend the money," he said. "Once we knew the shape and size of the field, we set up computer models to work out the economics of developing it. The key thing to remember is that oil at that time was two dollars and fifty cents, becoming three dollars, a barrel. We justified the development of Brent at that price. Within a couple of years, in the wake of the Yom Kippur War, OPEC got its act together. The price of oil is now ten times what it was when we originally did our sums." As Ric Charlton said, "what the hell is twenty-one million?"

Before the discovery of the Brent field, Williams had made a bet with a rival geologist in B.P. If there was oil in the northern North Sea, the man from B.P. said, he would buy Williams the best and most expensive dinner in London and would also eat his hat. After the fourth round of licensing, he bought the meal, but Williams let him off the hat.

THE North Sea work force moves around the fields only by helicopter. From six o'clock onward, Treasure Finder shakes faintly but continuously as the choppers come and go, the roar of their engines a moving bass accompaniment to every activity. The flights are divided into two categories: shuttles and buses. The shuttles take workers to their jobs during the rush hours, which start at six in the morning and six in the evening and last a couple of hours. In the quieter time between, the buses buzz around the field, picking up and dropping off passengers, mail, and freight. Shell's northern installations use four helicopters for all this, and they are based on Treasure Finder. Before takeoff, each pilot is handed a slip of paper with his flight plan set out like the clues for a children's treasure hunt. His instructions for a typical bus run around the field, calling at the four Brent installations—Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta—and at



Cormorant A, North Cormorant, Dunlin, and the drilling platform Star-drill, look like this:

```

  4      F      1 mb      1F      3
TF — D — C — A — B —
                        F
                        2f
N.COR — S.DRILL — COR —
  3          3 mb      2
  1          F
DUN — TF — A — TF
  2      2f          F

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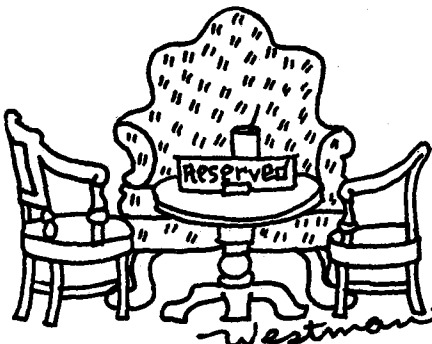
The code is simple: numerals indicate the number of passengers; "F" means big freight, "f" small freight, "mb" mailbag; anything written above the name of the installation means pick up; anything written below it means drop off. The coming and going, collecting and delivering are worked out at Brent Log, the flight-control unit, on Cormorant A. Brent Log is run by Shell but controls flights throughout the East Shetland Basin—an area with a radius of roughly forty miles, encompassing B.P.'s Magnus, in the north, Chevron's Ninian, in the south, and Union's Heather, in the west. Brent Log coordinates the Bell 212s that shift men and matériel from installation to installation, and it also controls the crew-change aircraft—the Chinooks and Sikorsky S-61s—shuttling to and from the beach. In 1978, when the fields were being built up and the platforms brought into operation, Brent Log handled a peak of twenty-two thousand aircraft movements in one month. This made the tiny office in the middle of nowhere busier than any other air-traffic-control center in Europe except London's Heathrow. In early 1983, when I was there, most of the building was finished, the platforms were pumping oil, and Brent Log had settled down to a mere fourteen thousand movements a month—between four and five hundred a day. That put it at about the level of Gatwick, Britain's second-busiest airport. Some of these movements were extremely short—the horizontal distance from the helipad on Treasure Finder to that on Brent Delta was less than a couple of hundred yards—but, even so, each has to be slotted into an over-all flight pattern and monitored coming and going.

No matter how meticulous the planning, a helicopter is, as the pilots say, "an unstable platform," and occasionally—very occasionally, considering the number of air movements—accidents happen. Shortly before I

went out to Brent, a Sikorsky S-61 on a crew-change run from one of the more southerly fields went down off Peterhead, north of Aberdeen; all seventeen passengers, and the Sikorsky, were rescued unharmed. In July, when I was in the field again, another crew-change helicopter crashed coming into Dyce Airport. In September of 1982, an emergency helicopter going to rescue an injured diver had gone into the sea with the aircrew and medics, killing all six. No one talks much about these incidents, but in a place where helicopters stop being strange machines used by tycoons and soldiers, and become, literally, buses, used as regularly and casually as a city worker uses an ordinary bus, every accident builds up tension, adding an extra, subliminal anxiety to the general strain created by the unnatural isolation of life offshore, the exhaustion of the work, the hostility of the stormy North Sea. "Every incident digs into your brain," I was told. "It's nothing dramatic, but the bubble of confidence tends to collapse a little every time something goes wrong. So there's always a bit of nervousness, a feeling of apprehension, about getting on the damn things."

Not so for the casual visitor. That first morning in the field, buzzing above a choppy sea from one clanking platform to another like a bee at a flower show, I felt only exhilaration. It was like being let in on some marvellous secret of human ingenuity and audacity. As we flew toward Brent Alpha, the most southerly of the four Brent platforms, the excitement of flying, of being there, of participating, in however tenuous a way, in the essential business of the world, combined with the sheer size and complexity and improbability of the installations scattered across the water, made me wonder why I had had to wait forty years to do things I had yearned to do as a schoolboy.

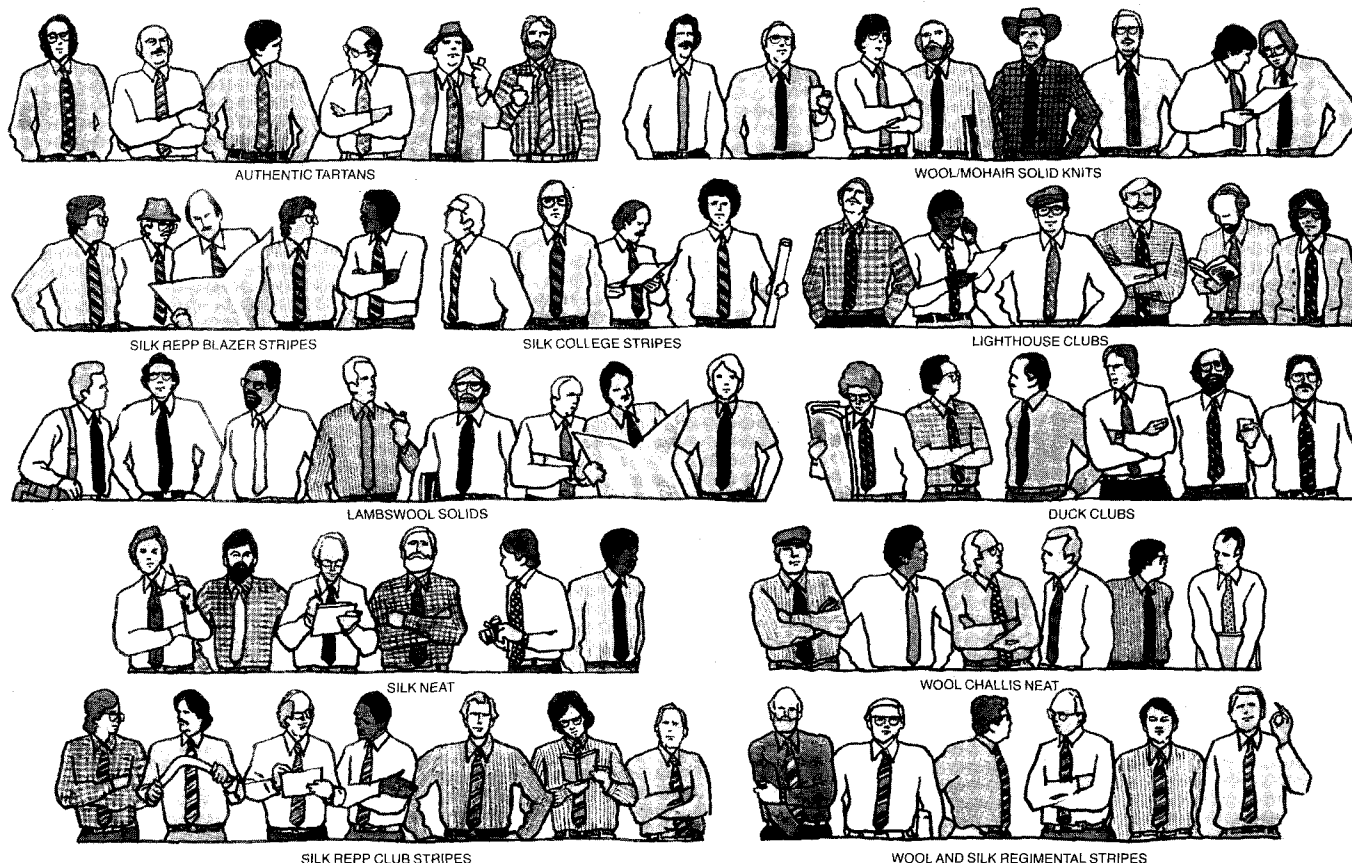
THE offshore-installation manager of Brent Alpha was Iain Blair, a former Royal Navy engineer.



Blair is soft-voiced and very short. He has innocent blue eyes in a lugubrious bloodhound's face; a thick neck; sloping shoulders; and forearms like Popeye's. Although he is in his forties, he still plays rugger and squash back on the beach and keeps fit offshore by running up and down the installation's innumerable stairs. Each morning, like all the other O.I.M.s, Blair meets with the five men responsible to him in the running of the platform: the offshore-installation supervisor, Ken Murray, who is in charge of the platform's general services, including deck work, catering, drainage, and helicopter movements; the production supervisor, whose job it is to keep the oil and gas flowing; the platform engineer, who maintains the production machinery ("The P.S. breaks it, the P.E. mends it," Blair said); the Shell toolpusher, who is directly responsible to Shell for drilling operations, although the drilling itself is subcontracted to a German firm, Deutag; and the construction engineer, who oversees any alterations or additions to the platform. Each of the five reports on the state of his particular province and on the work to be done during the next twenty-four hours; then, together, they discuss problems. Franz van Haaften, a blond Dutchman with a neatly trimmed beard, who was the Shell toolpusher, made his report in the fewest possible words, then sat in silence while the others had their say.

David Swankie, the platform engineer, had lank gray hair, gray stubble on his chin, a witty slit of a mouth, and a broad Scots accent. He had assumed the deadpan, Buster Keaton role of a man permanently oppressed by unruly machinery. In a funereal voice, he announced, "The air compressor has been moved to its final resting place." A two-beat pause. "I hope."

While van Haaften watched impassively, the others began a heated discussion of the turbines that supplied the installation with power. There were two of them—developed from the Rolls-Royce Avon jet engine. One had broken down and the generator had to be shifted to get at it. The difficulty was that the generator weighed eleven tons and none of the girders around it were designed to bear loads greater than three and a half tons. It was decided that the solution was not to lift the brute vertically but to slide it horizontally. This meant cutting away a steel staircase. "No trouble," said Swankie, poker-faced. "Just so long as



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they keep their acetylene torches away from the gas lines round the stairs." This provided a further flurry of anxiety and a lipless grin from Swankie.

"One last thing," said Ken Murray, who has floppy dark hair and a pleasant smile. Van Haften glanced at his watch and began to fidget. "There's a rumor that the Deutag roughnecks are bringing in porn videos from Hamburg and selling them to our chaps."

"Nothing wrong with that," answered Robert Paisley, the production supervisor. He was a young man with an incongruous flowered shirt and long hair. "Buying a video is up to the individual."

"Not when it's sold through the bond, it isn't," Murray said grimly.

"Look into it," Blair told him. "Right, gentlemen, if that's everything for this morning . . ."

Outside, a sharp wind was blowing, and the sea glittered. I panted after Blair up a maze of staircases to the helideck. He swept the horizon in a proprietary way and said, "Nice view, isn't it?" There were installations wherever I looked. I turned slowly, counting, while Blair reeled off their names: the three platforms of Chevron's Ninian field; Union's Heather; Shell-Esso's Cormorant A; Amoco's NW Hutton; Shell-Esso's Cormorant North, with Dunlin in the background, and, in front of them—quite near—Spar, a tanker-loading buoy and oil-storage facility that looks like a gigantic, top-heavy pillar-box; Britoil's Thistle; Conoco's Murchison; the three Brent platforms and Treasure Finder in line ahead and close to us; two installations of the Norwegian Statfjord field; a Norwegian tanker-loading buoy; the Brent remote gas flare, like a solitary, admonishing, burning finger; two Norwegian mobile drilling rigs. Twenty-two constructions, a whole industrial province, rising out of the icy sea. The remote flare, which burns off the gas that can't be coped with by the pipeline to St. Fergus, on the coast north of Aberdeen, blazed in the sunlight a mile or two away. Blair nodded at it and said, "One second of that would heat your house for years."

A small bird was perched on the edge of the helideck, wagging its tail feathers. I said, "What's that doing here? It looks like a swift."

Blair shrugged. "They get blown out here," he said. "Pigeons, crows,

owls. I've even seen a merlin. Not to mention all the usual seabirds. Myself, I like 'em. They add a touch of color, a little extra something to the routine. We had a man out here once, name of Crow, employed by a firm called Sparrow, found a quail on the helideck. It must have been carried from the beach on the undercarriage of a chopper."

A bluish-gray dot rose into the air above Cormorant A and moved slowly toward us, gradually evolving the bug eyes and angry snarl of a Bell 212. We moved to a little platform just below the helideck, where two passengers, a wooden box, and a mailbag were waiting. While we watched the helicopter approach, Blair said, "A couple of years ago, when I was on Fulmar, three pigeons landed so exhausted they couldn't move."

Took pity on the poor little blighters, crated 'em up, and sent 'em back to the beach on the next chopper. One of 'em was ringed, so the chaps in Aberdeen popped 'em on a train—no expense spared—and sent 'em back to their owner, somewhere south of London. The next thing we know, the fellow's written a furious letter to the head office saying we'd ruined his chances in a pigeon race to Norway and why didn't we mind our own bloody business?"

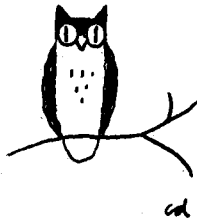
The helicopter landed as gently as if the deck were lined with porcelain. There was a flurry of activity as a misshapen piece of equipment was unloaded from the tail compartment and dragged across to where we stood watching. The helideck crewmen, wearing headphones under their hard hats, lugged the wooden box and the mailbag across to the chopper, signalled to the waiting passengers, bundled them in, secured the doors, and scurried back to cover. The Bell rose, hovered, dipped its nose, and swooped away, leaving us in blessed silence.

On the drilling floor, beneath the towering latticework spire of the derrick, the roughnecks were in the midst of a "round trip"—pulling the entire drill string back up the hole in order to change the bit. The pipe is usually five inches in diameter—it can vary between three and a half and six inches—and comes in lengths of thirty feet. On a round trip, it is pulled up three sections at a time by a gigantic hook and swivel hanging from a continuous wire rope that runs up to a crown block at the peak of the derrick, over a pulley, and back down to an even more

gigantic drum on the drilling floor. The roughnecks, or assistants to the driller, working rhythmically and with great precision, clamp multi-hinged tongs around the base of each three-length section of pipe that emerges. To prevent the rest of the pipe from dropping back down the hole, they hammer into the space between its protruding end and a rotary table on the drilling floor a linked ring of narrow jointed wedges with steel octopus-sucker pads on their inner surfaces. While two roughnecks heave and strain to keep the tongs still, the rotary table spins and the two sections of the pipe unscrew. The bared threads are oily but clean and surprisingly delicate. Everything else in the area is Brobdingnagian in size and covered with pungent, greasy drilling mud. The mud also coats the overalls and gloves and boots of the roughnecks, making them look like Roman wrestlers as they grapple with the base of the dangling ninety-foot stand of pipe and balance it carefully across the floor. Although the steel of the pipe is half an inch thick, the stand whips and flexes as though alive. High up in the derrick, a man stands on a little platform, leans out over the interior space like a gargoyle on a church, and lassos the top of the pipe. The clamps from which it is suspended are released, and he stacks it dexterously in place with the rest of the withdrawn pipes. They lean against the side of the derrick like sticks of rusty candy in a jar.

Nine thousand feet below the icy sea, the temperature in the oil reservoir is around 200 degrees Fahrenheit, and even after the pipe's long journey to the surface it is still hot. It steams gently as the roughnecks hose the mud from it while it is being withdrawn. Steam also rises from four vent holes in the rotary table. It seems strange, amid all this high technology, to find that perhaps there was some truth in the medieval theories of Hell. As each new section is withdrawn, one of the German roughnecks, who seems to be doing most of the heaviest work, spits into the steaming hole.

The last sections of pipe from the deepest parts of the well are drill collars, ponderous cylinders, thicker than the drill string, that add weight to the bit and help keep the drill string in tension. They are interrupted, every sixty or ninety feet, by elegantly machined stabilizers with wide bands of dark rifling. As each stabilizer is removed, the inner threads at its top and its base are meticulously hosed down,



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and then each end is capped with a heavy metal hat surmounted by a hemispherical ring. The new drilling bit waits on the far side of the derrick floor, pristine clean and painted silver. It looks like a great clenched fist with clogged teeth where the bent fingers should be. On its top, it, too, wears a shabby cap to protect the threads.

At the opposite side of the floor, in a control cabin with grimy windows, a big, taciturn German was pushing levers and eyeing a battery of flickering dials. It looked to me more complicated than the controls of the helicopter I had flown in that morning, but Blair was unimpressed by it. "The popular belief back on the beach is that the whole of the North Sea oil industry is on the frontiers of technology," he said to me. "In some areas, that's true, of course. But from an engineering point of view a large part of it is downright agricultural. For example, if the bit gets stuck—and it happens all too often—they have to jar the thing out. It's like hammering in reverse. Then the whole platform shakes, even though the bit itself may be down two miles or more. Of course, when you look at the problems of putting a platform in the North Sea the actual construction of the thing is quite clever. We're one of the smaller installations, and even we are seven hundred and fifty feet tall—four hundred and fifty feet in the water, then three hundred feet to the top of the derrick. Some of the big modern platforms with vertical gas flares are a thousand feet high from the tip of the flare to the seabed. That's as tall as the Eiffel Tower. So you have this huge construction that has to contend with wind and water. It's designed to withstand what's called the hundred-year storm—one-hundred-foot waves, and winds gusting up to a hundred and sixty miles per hour. So designing the platforms, building the brutes, floating 'em out, and then positioning 'em by satellite—all that is really quite clever. But once you get down to the basic services, like the power-generation-and-distribution systems, the hotel services, and the rest, there's nothing particularly clever about any of that. In fact, the power systems in a naval warship tend to be more sophisticated." He eyed the rows of dials in the control cabin and said grudgingly, "Occasionally, of course, we do buy some expensive bits of kit. But that's the name of the game up here. A development well, like the one we're drilling now, costs about three million

pounds. An exploration well will run you twice that."

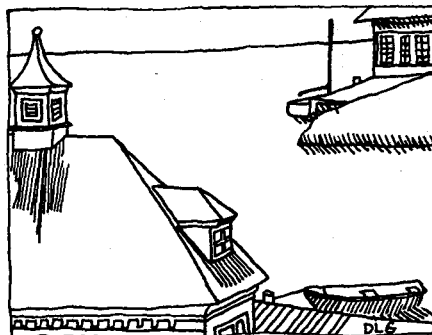
As a former officer in the Royal Navy, which is traditionally known as the silent service, Blair was particularly adept at understatement—a British art that generates a language as well as a style all its own. "Quite clever" is one of its key phrases, and it is interpreted most easily by a few facts. In 1981, Mobil's eight-hundred-and-ninety-foot-tall Statfjord B platform became the heaviest object ever moved across the face of the earth by man; it weighed eight hundred and twenty-five thousand tons and cost one billion eight hundred million dollars. Its companion, Statfjord C, weighs six hundred and eighty-six thousand tons, and Chevron's Ninian Central six hundred and thirty-six thousand tons. In the April, 1982, issue of *Scientific American*, Fred S. Ellers wrote, "To help build such immense structures semisubmersible derrick barges have been developed that are able to lift 5,000 tons, the weight of two World War II destroyers, nearly 200 feet above the water and to do so in the open ocean."

On the drilling floor, the tempo and the precision of the work rose as the round trip came to its end. The stabilizers nearest the bit were as massive and carefully machined as prize exhibits in a museum of nineteenth-century engineering masterpieces. Set into the gleaming surface of the last one to come up was a small brass plate on which was engraved, like a hallmark on silver, "7-REG," a series of numbers, and then, again, "7-REG." The final cylinder before the bit contained the Teleco tool, a relatively new instrument, developed to measure the position of the bit and the angle of the drill hole. It uses the drilling mud that is pumped down the center of the drill string to drive a small turbine that powers the tool itself. The mud is then used a second time on its journey back to the surface around the outside of the drill string: it acts as a transmission medium to send coded binary pulses

back up the hole to an electronic monitor with a digital readout in the control cabin. "An elegant solution," Blair said, momentarily impressed. Then he told me that Ferranti, the British electronics firm, had recently come up with an even more elegant solution: a little electronic package that can withstand the battering involved in logging a hole and is accurate, three miles down, to within a couple of feet. "No doubt about it, to me as an engineer the most interesting area is the drilling," Blair said. "The things they can do miles down at the bottom of a hole are quite incredible."

Devices like the Ferranti and Teleco tools are needed because the expense of an offshore platform is so great that the wells drilled from it have to cover a wide area. In the Brent field, the reservoir is about nine thousand feet down, but the average length of a well is thirteen to fourteen thousand feet. There were slots for twenty-eight wells on Brent Alpha—I watched them drilling the twenty-third—and they spread out below the platform like the branches of an inverted tree. Alan Jacobs, a former Merchant Navy officer who was then the head of Shell Expro's public-affairs department, in Aberdeen, had explained the problem to me. "Not only do you want to hit your target in the reservoir but once you have twenty or thirty wells all starting from the same point you don't want to drill into another well," he had said. "The more wells you have, the more complicated it becomes to find your way. If you look at a diagram, you see the wells radiating neatly away from below the platform. But in reality it's like spaghetti. It's sometimes said that the toolpushers offshore are trying to write their names underneath the platforms while they are drilling the wells. Can you imagine the torque at the surface when you turn a bit that far away and at such a complicated angle? It would be like laying knitting needles from Aberdeen to London and then trying to turn them. In the old days, of course, there were enormous torque losses, but now we do our deviation drilling with turbines that go down the hole with the bit and are given their correct angle by what we call bent subs—'subs' for 'substitutes'—or lengths of pipe with angles built into them, like a dog's leg. The Teleco tool enables us to know at every point precisely where and at what angle we are."

The huge drum on which the heavy



steel wire was wound like cotton thread on a spool spun for the last time, and the bit came out of the hole. Its top was painted gold; its teeth were silver, and were clogged with mud and partly chewed up. Compared with the machinery all around and the great, complex platform whose existence it justified, it seemed a negligible little thing. For a few moments, everyone was still. The bit swung from the end of the wire, the empty hole steamed. Then the chief roughneck spat twice into the hole for luck and rubbed his gloved hands together vigorously while his companions dragged the new bit across in readiness for the next stage of drilling. Twelve-hour shifts at that pace would be like training for the Olympics.

I followed Blair at the double down to the module deck—a succession of closed areas below the drilling floor where most of the installation's machinery is housed. He heaved back a heavy sliding door that opened onto the wellhead—a low, booming space in which the twenty-two completed wells rose in orderly ranks from the steel floor. At the top of each completed well is a gaudy contraption called a Christmas tree—a big tilted cube, chopped from a solid block of steel and painted silver. Red and yellow pipes bristle from the sides. Gauges and dials and taps sprout like flowers from the top and around the base. The colored pipes from one side of the Christmas tree control the flow of oil or gas from the well. Those from the other side are the kill pipes, used to shut the well down in case of trouble; through them is pumped the kill fluid, a high-density drilling mud heavy enough to hold down the pressure in the well. When the emergency is over, the kill fluid is replaced with water, and in as little as six hours the well can be flowing again.

Each well is lined throughout its length with casings cemented into the strata below the sea. The surface casing, or conductor, at the wellhead is a steel tube, an inch thick and thirty inches in diameter, that looks beefy enough to support the whole platform. These conductors are lowered through four hundred and fifty feet of water and then hammered three hundred feet into the seabed. The deeper the well goes, the narrower the casings become: starting at thirty inches, they finish at seven. "A pity it's so calm," Blair said. "Because the conductors come straight out of the sea, and aren't supported by the platform, they sway

around in bad weather. It can look quite impressive. If you don't know what's happening, you think the whole platform is on the move."

In the turbine module, although one of the engines was out of action, the noise was earsplitting. Brent Alpha's turbines are driven by gas produced by the platform, and each puts out fifteen megawatts of electricity—enough to supply a good-sized village but scarcely sufficient, even combined, to power the installation, which is, as Alan Jacobs put it, "a production platform, a refinery, a hotel, and an airport all in one." Power is needed to run the services on the platform, as well as to drill the wells and drive the machinery that separates the oil from the gas and pushes it along the pipeline to Sullom Voe, the oil terminal in

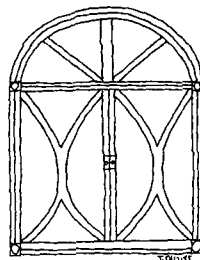
Shetland. It is also needed in even greater quantities for coping with the special problems of offshore production. In the Brent field, there are two thousand cubic feet of gas dissolved under pressure in every barrel of oil—about four times the North Sea average. So for each barrel of oil displaced two barrels of water must be injected into the reservoir. Added to that, before the completion of the gas pipeline to St. Fergus—two hundred and seventy-eight miles to the Scottish mainland—immense power was needed to recompress the gas and drive it back down into the reservoir, at six thousand pounds per square inch. According to Jacobs, the four Brent installations alone produce enough electricity to supply Aberdeen and most of the surrounding Grampian region. That day, however, Brent Alpha had to make do with a single turbine, which roared like a tortured giant while two engineers in earmuffs labored on the other engine and a third workman attacked the steel ladder with a blowtorch.

The enclosed parts of the superstructure of offshore installations are made up of prefabricated steel units—called modules—but only those designed for living and working in continuously have proper sound insulation. Elsewhere, noise is a constant condition of life, and it doesn't take long to become a connoisseur of its styles and gradations. In the module in which the drilling mud was cleaned, the racket was almost as loud as that of the turbines, but broken and dispersed, like the noise of an angry crowd on the

move. Pumps hissed and banged, engines clattered, giant sieves rattled and shook as they panned the cuttings from the mud. Beneath the steel-grille floor, a sluggish river of black sludge inched its way into stinking vats. The smell was overpowering, yet Blair appeared not to notice it. He stood on a walkway between the shaking pans and the tanks, his feet inches above the sludge, and tried to explain to me the finer points of the process. But the din was too much for both of us, however loud he shouted. Finally, he turned and trotted off, with me at his heels.

In the process module, the din was subdued to a steady hum, like chanting. This was the business end of Brent Alpha—the refinery, full of gleaming silver pipes and giant cylinders inside which the gas was separated from the oil. But the only evidence of all that complex activity and the huge pressures was a faint vibration, as though the air inside the module were being compressed from a great height.

The nerve center of Brent Alpha is a control room like the flight deck of the *Battlestar Galactica*: banks of dials and lights and digital readouts; rows of computers; television screens displaying diagrams and figures and abbreviations, all in glorious Technicolor. It seemed hard to reconcile this humming space-age technology with the agricultural aspects of the installation: the giant hooks and drums, the forest of rust-streaked pipes, the sweating roughnecks, and the ubiquitous mud. On the dials and gauges and video-display units in the control room, the engineers can monitor every function in the production process, from the working temperature of the turbines or the condition of one of their inlet or outlet manifolds to the flow of oil in the pipes and the precise position of the drilling bit two and a half miles down. (Back at Aberdeen is a control room to which all the information from all Shell's offshore installations is fed. It looks like a layman's idea of the war room at the Pentagon: charts projected onto illuminated screens on the walls; hushed technicians attending to computer panels and readouts on which they can monitor every function in the whole of Shell-Esso's North Sea fields. If anything goes wrong, engineers on the platforms can confer with experts in Aberdeen, three hundred miles away, who have the same infor-

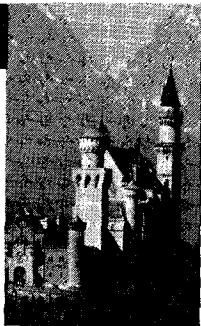


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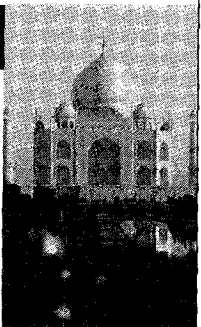
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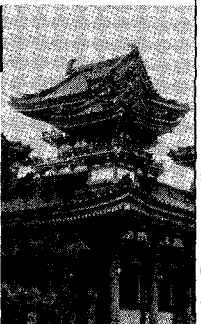
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mation displayed instantaneously in front of them.) But Brent Alpha's cheerful Scots control-room supervisor was still not satisfied. "We've no got telemetry yet," he said. "We canna control the functions from here—only monitor them." He seemed slightly shamefaced that all his high-tech gear should be, in such a crucial way, limited. "Still, it takes time to get used to things," he said. "When the video-display units were first installed, the answers came so quick that none of us believed them. So we always did the calculations ourselves to double-check. Then we realized that the computers always got it right. I suppose it would be the same if we had telemetry."

Outside, big gas pipes were strung around two sides of the module deck, like a belt of fat. The grid of gas lines from all the installations in the East Shetland Basin was soon to be joined up at Brent Alpha. From it, a thirty-six-inch pipeline travels along the seabed to St. Fergus, thirty-five miles north of Aberdeen, where British Gas has its receiving terminal, at the northern end of the British Gas grid. Littered about the deck were big red plastic diaphragms with rows of steel scrubbing brushes on their concave sides. These were "pigs," which clean the pipeline, pushed through the pipes from one end to the other by gas pressure. There are "pig detectors" in the control room to monitor their journey along the pipeline. Blair gave the pigs his supreme accolade: "They look a bit crude, but really they're quite clever."

I followed him, still on the double, down metal staircases on the outside of the installation until we were about sixty feet above the sea. Up close, the platform's six steel legs, pile-driven into the seabed far below, seemed enormous. Braced between them were giant tubes—painted yellow and kept scrupulously clean of barnacles and weeds—with railed catwalks strung along their tops, or, rather, along some of their tops: half the catwalks were missing, because the sea washes them away as quickly as they are put in place. Above our heads was a maze of girders, crossing and recrossing one another at all angles, like a hedge of yellow thorns eighty yards thick. At the center of the hedge, the conductors, through which the pipes travel from the seabed, rose straight out of the water and disappeared into the

steel floor of the module deck. The sea was deep, deep blue.

In this isolated place—between the water and the purposeful production-well-refinery-hotel-airport above my head—I began to comprehend for the first time the size of the thing and the miracle of its being here. From up above in a helicopter, the installations are dwarfed by the ocean, and once you're on board you are sucked in by the activity, the detail, the technicalities of the process, and the continuous battering noise. But down here, with the intermeshed girders shutting out the sky, and the great steel legs dropping hundreds of feet to the seabed, and nothing to be heard except the slosh of the sea and the whistling of the wind, there seemed no limit to the strangeness of the huge

structure or the wildness of the place.

In September of 1965, the Sea Gem, a barge that had been equipped with five pairs of retractable legs and converted into a jack-up drilling rig, struck the first gas in British waters, in what was to become B.P.'s West Sole field, off Cleethorpes, in Lincolnshire. Three months later, while preparations were being made to move Sea Gem to another location she capsized and sank, killing thirteen men. Alex Norquoy, who was born and brought up in Orkney and, like many Orkneyans, went to sea as soon as he left school, was at that time a navigator on a Merchant Navy cargo ship. He is a short, tubby man with a red face, black hair, shrewd dark eyes, and a rather gentle manner. His Orkneyan accent sounds more Norse than Scots. "I happened to see the Sea Gem when I was heading down to Argentina, and when we came back a few months later I saw her again—upside down, with her ten legs in the air," he told me. "And somehow that sight gripped my imagination. From the marine point of view, they were doing things I'd never seen done before: taking what were to me strange vessels, towing them out to sea, setting down their legs, jacking the whole thing up, and then drilling into the seabed; then lifting the legs again after a while and towing them somewhere else and repeating the whole process. All that was fascinating to me as a sailor. I thought, This really looks like something big. I joined Shell a couple of years later, when it was just getting under way in Aberdeen, and I've worked for it ever



since. But I'm still fascinated by all this."

I had talked to Norquoy in Aberdeen, where he is now movable-operations supervisor, one of several managers of a forty-acre site on which Shell stores and maintains the drilling equipment for its sixteen offshore installations. Because I had not yet been out to Brent, the domain he controlled seemed to me fascinating in itself. There were warehouses as big as aircraft hangars—painted white and yellow inside and blue outside—housing racks of drilling bits, pressure caps, bent subs, ribbed coupling cones, as well as batteries of electronic gear for testing each piece, since even a minor failure offshore can shut down production on an entire installation. Outside, cranes lumbered around the acres of neatly piled well casings and conductors and carefully marked bundles of drill pipes, wired together like asparagus. There were lifeboats waiting to be shipped, and countless drums of green and black electric cables, some as thick as my arm, others as thin as a finger. And, even outside in the cold, wet evening, every exposed threaded end of pipe was greased and wrapped like treasure. This combination of heavy engineering and high precision, of brute strength and delicacy, seemed to me not just fascinating but also, in some curious way, moving, like the scene in the old Frankenstein movie where the monster plays with the child.

Not far off the shore, a drilling rig lay at anchor, waiting for somewhere to go. Farther out, to the south, a huge installation, lights blazing on its superstructure, was moving slowly out of the rain clouds, a tug straining in front of it. A heavily laden supply boat thrashed out to sea from Aberdeen. A flock of gulls rose suddenly from the edge of the water beyond the warehouses, wheeled in concert, and settled again farther up the beach.

That had been my first blurred glimpse of the size and mysterious complexity of offshore oil operations. Now, on a narrow platform below Brent Alpha, with the wind blowing spray in my face, I understood how these gigantic seagoing structures had gripped Alex Norquoy's imagination and never let go.

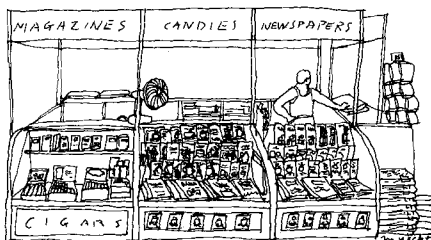
FROM time to time—usually in emergencies—special pieces of equipment are shipped offshore by helicopter. Everything else goes by supply boat, from the fifty-six thou-

sand nine hundred and forty-eight tons of piping to the two and a half million eggs, one thousand and fifteen gallons of tomato ketchup, and nine hundred and seventy miles of toilet paper needed each year on Shell's northern installations—a total of more than half a million tons of supplies.

Getting there is easy: the journey to Brent from Torry Dock, in Aberdeen, takes twenty-four hours; from Holmsgarth, in Shetland, a mere eight. There are only two major problems, and both begin when the supply boat arrives at the platform: how to hold the vessel steady in a howling wind and a fifty-foot sea, and how then to transfer the materials to the installation. "It demands very fine seamanship from the ship's master and very fine crane driving as well," Alan Jacobs had said. "You get a load on the end of that crane; suddenly it drops fifty feet; the next moment it's coming back up at you. Back-loading—transferring materials from the platform to the supply boat—is even trickier. The boat has probably been to other platforms and has containers already stowed on the deck. All that's left is a little square of space, and maybe the wind is blowing at forty knots. The crane driver has to put a container down into that little square on the moving deck and let his hook go before the boat drops again. Then the deckhands have to get it lashed down double-quick, because the last three deaths we've had out there have occurred when the stern of a boat has tipped up and an unsecured container has gone wallop and squashed the poor bastards flat. Maybe half a million tons of supplies doesn't sound much, given the size of our North Sea operations. But when you consider the difficulties of simply moving the stuff on and off the platforms you get a different perspective." Like nearly everyone involved in the offshore world, Jacobs enjoys dazzling outsiders with the statistics of the business and the disproportionate troubles that have to be overcome. But in some areas he, too, remains impressed. "Those crane drivers," he said. "They're real artists."

The glass-sided control cabin of the

crane on Brent Alpha is close to the flame of the gas vent, which sticks out horizontally over the sea and warms the crane driver, whatever the weather. "It's nice and cozy now," Gordon Bunch said. "But in summer it gets a bit torrid." Gordon Bunch is a corpulent middle-aged man with curly hair, a soft West Country accent, and twenty years' experience as a crane driver—five of them in the North Sea. His generous belly comfortably filled the space between the cabin's padded chair and the row of little levers that controlled the crane. He played them like an organist while I stood outside on a railed catwalk with a hundred and fifty feet of space between the steel grille of its floor and the churning sea. "Your elements," he said when I asked him the difference between working offshore and on land. He swung the crane around until our backs were toward the gas vent and the hook was above a little slot on the platform's superstructure. "Wind makes a hell of a difference. We reckon to work up to forty knots. Occasionally, we have to go over, but it's Shell policy to stop at forty. And at more than that it's not ideal, like. You haven't got the same control. The containers spin like tops when you pick them up." A foreman stood beside the slot and patted his hands up and down as if he were playing bongo drums. Bunch moved a lever, and the hook sank out of sight into the slot. He went on talking: "Besides that, the boat is moving up and down, see, and she's rolling from side to side. Plus the fact that if they can't hold her off she's going in and out. And that's where your precision comes in. You've got to hold your load over, then drop it down. But, provided it's not too rough, you can square it up pretty well to where they want it." The foreman played another brief riff on his invisible drums. Bunch juggled his levers, and the hook came up with a rubber flotation bag hanging from it. Beneath the bag, curved pieces of steel tubing dangled, sticking out in all directions. The load rotated in the wind yet cleared the slot with inches to spare and touched nothing, despite the fact that Bunch was still driving blind. He nodded approvingly at the foreman and said, "He's a good man for directions." He swung the load through two hundred degrees and dropped it gently onto a deck, just out of sight, where the platform's spare equipment was stored. "It's a matter of coördination with your levers, really. Just your



basic crane skills, which you've learnt over the years—only more so. In actual fact, sometimes it's quite fun when the wind's tricky and the boat's playing up. But the real difference out here is height. It doesn't matter how long you've been driving cranes, when you first come offshore and drop that hook down you're likely to be miles out. But once you get used to it you drop your boom out and you know more or less exactly where the hook is going."

A supply boat had drawn up to the platform and was pitching up and down in the boisterous sea, waiting to unload. It was a clumsy-looking vessel, its bridge and crew's quarters squeezed on top of each other in the bows, leaving a great, flat platypus tail, crammed with containers. It was brand-new. "Not a week old," Bunch said authoritatively. Its paintwork was gleaming terra-cotta, its deck was unmarked. "Balдар Vigra, Oslo" was painted on its stern.

"I'll show you what I mean," Bunch said. "I'll swing out the boom and you tell me when to drop her."

I leaned into his cabin and peered through the window while the crane rotated. The Balдар Vigra looked improbably small and far off, but I thought it was worth a try. "Now," I said.

Bunch pulled a lever, and the hook dropped. It landed sixty feet short of the boat's stern. "See what I mean?" Bunch said.

He brought the hook back up and manipulated the levers again, lowering the hook gently until it was directly over a container in the stern. Two sailors, as agile and quick as monkeys in the confined space, attached the hook to cables on the container. They waved. Bunch waited, playing his line like a fisherman, watching the sea and the rolling, bucking boat. It rose and fell, rose and fell, rose again. At the precise moment when the boat was at the peak of the incoming wave, Bunch pulled a lever, and the container slid clear of its narrow space. It swung up and around in a great arc, like a cannonball, then stopped suddenly, as if by word of command, a foot or so from Brent Alpha's superstructure.

"Magic," I said.

"Ah, well, see, that's where your crane driving comes in," Bunch said. "The trick is to keep up with her, so you're always over her, never pulling, never letting her get ahead. It's what you call a knack."

The foreman had moved round and

was now playing his drums above the invisible equipment deck. Bunch watched him, not his levers, and the container sank out of sight. A few minutes later, the foreman signalled again, Bunch manipulated the levers, and another container rose into the air from the equipment deck, swung smoothly up and around, stopped suddenly in midflight, and dropped into the first container's place on the heaving deck of the supply boat. The deckhands uncoupled the hook and waved. The moment the hook was clear, the Balдар Vigra took off for the next stop on its schedule.

"Jesus," I said.

Bunch looked pleased.

THE next morning, the sky was overcast, a cold wind was blowing, and all the early shuttles were full. But there was room for me on an eleven-o'clock bus that was taking a doctor and a medical orderly out to Stadrill. The doctor, who was new to the job, was touring the installations to see what their sick bays had to offer in the way of medical facilities. The orderly, an old hand, was going along as his minder, ostensibly to check that all the first-aid equipment was in place. The Shell fields' hospital is on Treasure Finder, and is fully equipped with curtained beds, an operating table, and all the necessary, ominous gear. Elsewhere, the facilities are more basic, and anyone needing serious medical help is flown either to Treasure Finder or back to the beach. The doctor was a tall, blank-faced young man from the Transvaal, just out of medical school, who spoke—briefly—only when spoken to.

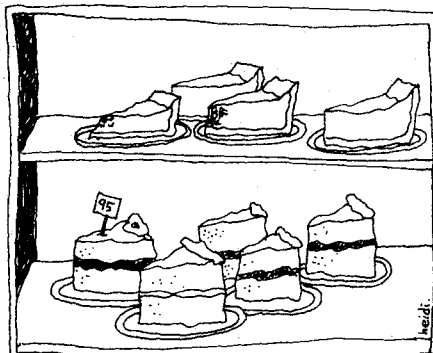
Stadrill, that month, was at the northeast corner of the fields, beyond North Cormorant and very remote. The eleven-o'clock bus took its time, calling at most of the platforms on the way with passengers and freight, dropping off and collecting, doubling back from Bravo to Alpha with a single passenger and a small parcel, then

off at last northward over the choppy sea, with no landfall before Spitsbergen and the Arctic ice cap. I leaned forward, hoping to see another installation, or, at least, a supply boat. Nothing. I remembered what I had been told about the feeling of apprehension that accompanies every helicopter flight. I also remembered a couple of uneasy lines by John Berryman: Starts again always in Henry's ears the little cough somewhere, an odour, a chime.

The South African doctor stared out the window with a face like stone. The last leg of the flight took twenty minutes but seemed far longer. Stadrill, with no gas flare to announce its presence, looked small and lonely in the endless gray water.

Stadrill is an exploration drilling rig, with no processing plant and with a crew of a mere seventy or eighty—half the complement of even a small installation, such as Brent Alpha. Like Treasure Finder, it is a semisubmersible—a coffee table on two submarines—and it moves under its own power from one drilling site to the next. It is old as North Sea vessels go—it was built in 1975 as a replacement for Staflo, the first drilling rig in the area—but the accommodation is comfortable, and the cabins, even those with four berths, are considerably more spacious than those on Treasure Finder. Because it is the one installation in the North Sea that is crewed and operated almost entirely by Shell, with very little of the work contracted to outside firms, those on board are the longest-serving Shell employees in the area; some had graduated from Staflo and had been shuttling back and forth to the beach for as much as fifteen years. The atmosphere was friendly and relaxed, with none of Treasure Finder's bustling, transit-camp impersonality.

Stadrill has two offshore-installation managers—the barge engineer when it is on the move, the toolpusher when it is stationary and at work. The toolpusher, Peter Carson, was bearded and lanky, with close-set eyes, a neo-Australian accent (he had worked in Brunei), and a limitless fund of expertise. He rattled off the fine points of directional drilling, the chemistry of drilling mud, the intricacies of core sampling, the differences between FINDS (the Ferranti Inertial Directional Survey) and the Teleco tool, leaving a blur of high tech and a strong, precise impression of a lover's passion for his subject. When we



toured the rig, the detail was blurred even more by the terrible smell. The mud they were using on that particular section of the well was based on diesel oil, and the whole platform reeked of it in varying degrees: bad on the drilling floor, intolerable in the module in which the mud was cleaned and recycled. Outside the living area, the mud coated everything: the decks, the stairs, the handrails, the machinery. Within minutes, it had coated us, too. A black, padded executive chair, plunked down incongruously in front of the Teleco-tool readout panel, was encrusted with the stuff, as though someone had rolled in it and then sat down heavily.

Standing on one side of the high deck below the drilling floor was a gigantic blowout preventer—a device that controls the flow from the well, like the Christmas tree but many times as large. It would eventually be used to cap the wildcat that the crew was working on above, but for the time being it was dismantled for repairs. Two technicians were squatting inside it, as though in an elongated diving bell. One of them, wielding an outsize spanner, wore thick, scholarly glasses and had what looked like a stethoscope around his neck. Down here, the smell of diesel was almost bearable, because at the center of the deck was the moonpool—a great, square space opening to the sea. At the center of the moonpool, the riser from the well came out of the heaving water and disappeared into the derrick floor above. Steel cables dangled around it, complicated girders and struts protruded at all angles, and the whole thing seemed to be swaying dangerously, although the riser was in fact stationary, and it was Stadrill that was shifting, on its invisible pontoons. When I leaned over the guardrail at the moonpool's edge to breathe the fresh air, I could see the waves building up threateningly around the legs of the rig.

Stadrill's barge engineer was a wiry little man with a pointed Beelzebub beard, sharp dark eyes, and a taste for irony. His name was Martin Law, and he had spent thirteen years in the Merchant Navy. "I started in passenger ships and went downhill from there," he said. "Ended up in a tanker." His control room was crammed with shining banks of electronic gear, but since it was also the ship's bridge there were windows along one side, with a view of the

empty sea. At their center, facing a great bank of readouts, switches, and levers, was a comfortable raked chair, in which Law sits when Stadrill is under way. He told me he had first come out to the North Sea oil fields in the early, wildcatting days, when safety regulations ranked a distant second to the action. He had been mate on a supply boat carrying a container that was urgently needed by an American exploration rig. A storm was blowing, the seas were high, and the winds were gusting far above the forty-knot limit now imposed by Shell. But the Americans had wanted the container badly, and the crane driver and the deckhands knew their job. Somehow or other, they managed to hook the crane to the shackles of the four cables attached to the corners of the container. But just as the crane driver was about to lift the thing clear two vast waves hit the supply boat and drove it off. "The crane looked like a fishing rod that's been taken by a shark," Law said. "The cable was almost horizontal." While the captain fought to bring the supply boat back close to the rig, the deckhands tried to release the hook. "But the cable was as tight as a fiddle string. It was too dangerous. So the crane driver did the only thing he could—picked his moment and yanked the container up. It went flying into the air like a football. Two of the shackles broke, but the other two held, thank God, and no one was hurt. I thought, Enough is enough. It's time I joined the other side."

The control room was calm and hushed; the only sounds were a faint hum and an occasional click. But outside the window—distanced, as in a silent movie—the wind had got up and the sea was steadily rising. A small trawler plowed slowly into view, crossing from right to left. The installations, by law, have to be attended by standby boats, which circle constantly, like sheepdogs around a docile flock, in case a man falls overboard or a platform has to be abandoned. The standby boats work four-week shifts—a monotonous job but at least a steady source of alternative income for the economically depressed Scottish fishing fleet. The standby boat outside the window moved so slowly that she seemed to progress hardly at all, but she rolled recklessly from side to side, and at the top of each wave her bow lifted clear out of the water. "That's nothing," Law said dourly. "In a big



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sea, she'd go down so far you wouldn't see her mast." A couple of months earlier, he told me, a standby boat had been out in front of Stadrill when a violent storm blew up. The boat was headed into a wind so fierce that it was unable to turn, and it had steamed sixty miles north before the storm blew itself out, although, according to the rulebook, it was never supposed to stand more than five miles off. Law had watched the pantomime from his captain's chair, with Stadrill rolling no more than a few degrees at the height of the storm, and he told the story now with relish. "Look at the bugger," he said contentedly. "You'd need a stomach of corrugated iron to do that job."

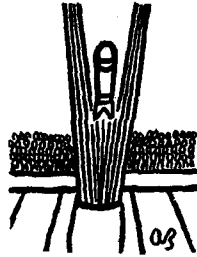
Because of deteriorating weather, the three-o'clock bus was cancelled. The doctor and the orderly and I sat in the recreation room, watching "Assault on Precinct 13" and drinking instant coffee out of plastic cups, until the five-o'clock shuttle arrived. When we boarded it, the sea was dirty gray and bristled with white horses, and the clouds raced low, blotting out the horizon. The chopper rattled along, in and out of the bottom layer of cloud, which sank lower and merged into mist as we went south. By the time we reached Treasure Finder, it was almost dark. Brent Bravo and Brent Charlie were blurred shapes hung with lights, Brent Alpha was a shadow, and the remote gas flare was a wavering banner of fire, disproportionately large, signalling wildly in the darkness. When the helicopter touched down softly on Treasure Finder, I felt as if I had come home.

That night, the field was so full that eleven men had to be flown back to the beach because there were no beds for them.

BEFORE I went offshore, I had been told that, whatever the drawbacks of life in the North Sea might be, at least the food was what the Michelin Guide would classify as worth the detour. "French chefs," they had said in Aberdeen. "Haute cuisine. Don't be fooled by the fact that the lads get through a thousand gallons of ketchup a year. They can't help themselves. It's a conditioned reflex." On the spot, the lads themselves were less impressed. "If a man's dissatisfied with any aspect of his life out here, the first thing he complains

about is the catering service," Ken Murray said. "Obviously, we can lay it on when we like, and as a rule the food is fairly good. But I personally don't feel it's quite what it's cracked up to be. The stories you hear back on the beach about the marvellous nosh we get are simply not true. Certainly there's a menu for every meal, and it's always substantial, but it's not like a night out on the town with the wife."

More like an evening at home with the wife, perhaps. And that is appropriate after a killing day's work: mammoth helpings of roast meat and two veg; big, overcooked steaks on demand. It is in the spirit of the traditional English Sunday lunch, the best possible prelude to sleep. The breakfasts, however, are sensational. The cold table in



Treasure Finder's mess hall is loaded with fruit and jugs of juice and as many brands of cereal as a well-stocked supermarket. (Later in the day, it is spread with salads, pickled herring, and a vast assortment of cold cuts.) As for the hot food, the cheerful kitchen-staff people ladle out porridge, bacon (four or five rashers at a time), sausages, black pudding, kippers, haddock, and as many eggs as you can handle—fried, scrambled, poached, or boiled. There is coffee (real, instant, decaffeinated), tea, hot chocolate, milk, and great jugs of cream; bread (white and whole wheat), rolls, and toast; and a small regiment of sauces, as well as the ubiquitous ketchup. The variety, like the quantity, is overwhelming.

It needs to be. Without alcohol or live television or current newspapers—the latest are rarely less than a couple of days old—food is the only form of relaxation, apart from videotapes, and the mess hall is the only place where people pause to talk a little before weariness and digestion engulf them. It is also the place for what passes offshore for jokes. One evening at dinner, an enthusiastic, hard-sell voice announced over the P.A. system, "Just a few tickets left for the Saturday-night disco on Staffjord. Apply now to admin. First come, first served." The man sharing my table was built like a gorilla. He wore a black singlet, and both his arms were tattooed from shoulder to wrist. He winked, shook his head, sighed. "Take nae notice," he said. "There's a mug on board fresh out from the beach who doesn't know his arse from his elbow. The

lads are trying it on. Same old game. Always Staffjord. Foreign, you see. Different rules. They tell him there'll be beer and big, blond Norwegian stewardesses to dance with. Last month, some puir wee chappie swallowed the whole thing hook, line, and sinker. Dressed himself up in his Sunday suit, went up to admin—Arthur, up there, goes along with it—put on a survival suit, and waited two hours for the chopper before he saw the joke."

The morning after I went out to Stadrill, the wind was still blowing and the sea was high, yet the whole field was blanketed in fog. Because the area is so vast, the forty-knot fog is a quirk of the North Sea oil fields, swaddling and blowing at the same time, grounding the helicopters and chilling you to the bone for hour after interminable hour. In summer, when warmer air clashes with a cold east wind, the haar comes down—a fog like smoke that immobilizes everything for days on end and drives the men who are waiting to fly home crazy with impatience. "There's a ten-mile fog bank approaching," Arthur, the admin clerk, announced one afternoon to the roughnecks who had checked in for the last Chinook back to Aberdeen. "And that's just its height." Nobody even smiled.

But a gale-force fog is, by its nature, a short-term threat, and the atmosphere that morning in the mess hall was relaxed. I had arrived for breakfast at seven—late for Treasure Finder, where the meal is served from five until seven-thirty—and lingered over coffee, chatting with a young scaffolder from Aberdeen whose name was Roy. The scaffolders have one of the most spectacular of the North Sea jobs—almost as dangerous as that of the divers, and more visible. They work mainly on the network of girders beneath the module deck, repainting them constantly in bright Shell yellow as a protection against the weather. The girders overhang the churning sea, and the principal working and living areas of the installation overhang the girders, isolating the scaffolders in a world of their own. In that lonely place, they erect their steel spiderwebs, climb out over the cold, empty space, sandblast the old paint away, prime the surface, and paint it over twice. Even for those with a head for heights, the loneliness of the situation and the brutality of the weather make North Sea scaffolding as truly a "dreadful trade" as that of the samphire gatherer in "King Lear." One

of the roughnecks told me, "You've got to admire the scaffolders. But I don't much like them. They're all prima donnas."

Roy from Aberdeen, however, was modest and rather shy. He had a narrow, bony face, and when he talked his head came forward and the skin stretched tight over his cheeks and neck, as though he were straining at a leash. He said that it had been a year since he was last offshore—far too long to wait, he couldn't get enough of it.

"Because of the pay?" I asked.

"Oh, the pay." He ducked his head. "At night, you look around at the flares and lights and you see all that money." His voice was low and full of awe, like that of a man in church. "Of course, the pay's good, but that's not the point. What I like is the peace and quiet, the fresh air. You get away from the girlfriend and the family, from all the troubles. It's like going through one of those black holes from one universe to another. A few months ago, I did a job on the west coast of the Highlands, north of Ullapool. It was the same there: peace and quiet and fresh air."

A large, grizzled man sitting at the end of the table raised his head from an Alistair MacLean thriller and stared balefully at the young scaffolder. "Fresh air!" he said. "You go out there on deck and nine times out of ten you get a faceful of soot or acid grease fumes. Three-quarters of the people on board go home with dandruff and God knows what other skin complaints. Fresh air, he says!" He went back to his book. The foghorn sounded its three long notes.

The scaffolder blushed. "Better than Aberdeen, for a' that," he muttered. Then he launched into a story about an accommodation barge that had lost its anchors in a storm during the winter of 1982 and drifted for three days with all six hundred men on board singing "Anchors Aweigh." He said, "When the rescue boat finally got a line onto her, the first man off was the safety officer." Like Martin Law's story about the standby boat that could not turn, it was typical of North Sea folk tales, all of which serve one purpose: to sanitize disaster by turning it into a joke. That, too, is part of an elaborate but unspoken code of behavior that everyone follows in order to make tolerable the constricted, precarious life offshore: never dramatize, never dwell on the possible dangers, never intrude.

One evening, I took my plate of food to a table where two Geordies were sitting—heavysset men with gray, drained faces. One of them had his right hand swaddled in bandages. He said he had slipped on a greasy ladder, fallen, and cut his thumb to the bone just above the tendon that joins it to the palm. His eyes, behind thick spectacles, were dim and bewildered. He ate left-handed and with difficulty. His companion asked, "Does your food want cutting up?"

The injured man shook his head. "Nae, I'll manage." He shovelled roast beef awkwardly into his mouth, then said more cheerfully, "I gotter see t' quack again tomorrer. Maybe he'll send me back to t' beach." The other man nodded sympathetically, watching him carefully as he fumbled with his food. He seemed as worried and protective as a mother with a sick child.

Later, when I was on Brent Charlie, I asked the offshore-installation manager, a soft-spoken former Merchant Navy officer called Bob Ingram, if he thought life offshore might not be easier if there were women—nurses, for instance—working alongside the men.

He shook his head vehemently, and said, "You get some really tough cases out here—men you wouldn't want to get within a mile of if you saw them in Aberdeen with a couple of drinks inside them. But offshore, if they get in each other's way, they say, 'Sorry, mate.' Women aren't like that. Women aren't polite." He waved a hand vaguely, as if to forestall an argument. "Don't misunderstand me. I'm a married man—happily married. But conditions out here are difficult, and the work comes first. You have to learn not to take things personally. You have to keep your distance. In my experience, women don't find that easy."

Work and impersonality are the rules of the game up there. The complexities of oil exploration and production are infinite, and their solutions are imaginative, subtle, even delicate. But life itself is simplified, absolved from emotional ambiguities. Yet it is also curiously—to use Bob Ingram's word—polite, with none of the abrasive us-against-them, workers-against-management hostility that plagues British industry back on the beach. Perhaps that is because there is already quite enough hostility out there in the stormy North Sea.

Or perhaps it is because most of the workers are specialists of one kind or another, whose emotional lives are absorbed by their work. Or perhaps, after a twelve-hour shift, they are simply too tired for anything except peace and quiet. Whatever the reason, the atmosphere in the mess hall and the coffee shop and the recreation rooms is subdued, friendly, undemanding.

THE helicopter hangar on Treasure Finder is brightly lighted, as clean as an operating theatre, and permeated by the clear, sharp smell of engine oil. There were no flights on the morning of the forty-knot fog, and the four Bristow Bell 212s were lined up side by side, their rotor blades tied back along their fuselages. In the shadowless fluorescent light, their red-white-and-blue liveries and vertical rear rotors, painted white with a narrow red stripe, looked as bold and cheerful as a Pop Art painting.

On one side of the hangar, two mechanics were working on an engine. One was a Yorkshireman with fair hair and sharp features, the other a small, dark man from Yarmouth who had learned his trade in the R.A.F., then joined Bristow at the time when gas was discovered off the coast of his native Norfolk. They worked like surgeons, unhurriedly, with great precision and concentration, wiping clean each part of the engine as they dismantled it, and placing it neatly on a shelf.

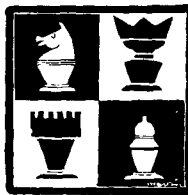
The Yorkshireman said, "You only get helicopter work in the armpits of the world. For ordinary conditions, choppers are too expensive."

"God, when He worked it all out, said, 'If they want oil, they're going to have to look for it,'" added the man from Yarmouth.

They said they had worked in Singapore, Iran, the Persian Gulf. "I like a change," said Norfolk. "A couple of years here, a couple of years there. It's a bit of a gypsy's life. O.K. But I couldn't work a nine-to-five; it'd drive me mad."

They told me they did two-week stints offshore: night shift the first week, day shift the second. Norfolk said, "In winters, the days are so short up here that when you work night shifts you don't see daylight for a whole week. It's dark when you come on at six and dark when you finish, twelve hours later."

Yorkshire was holding a screw-



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driver between his teeth while he used both hands to fiddle with something small inside the engine. He removed the screwdriver. "Could be worse," he said. "Some of the roustabouts work the night shift for two straight weeks. When they get back home, their bodies are on Australian time, and it takes them days to adjust. That's so much real time lost."

I said that surely their experience and expertise qualified them to work where they wanted, not just in the uniformly dreadful places where oil is drilled.

The Yorkshireman answered, "A helicopter's an expensive piece of kit, compared with a fixed-wing aircraft. The operating costs are very high, because there are so many moving parts—rotors, gearboxes, things that can go wrong and have to be replaced. So a company like Bristow can't rely on casual private passengers; there aren't enough V.I.P.s to go around. Only the oil companies have that kind of money and need that kind of regular work."

"Anyway, who wants V.I.P.s?" the man from Yarmouth said. "Out here, something's happening; they're getting results. You can see it, you can hear it, and most of the time you can bloody smell it. There's a satisfaction in that, you know."

"Too bloody true," said the Yorkshireman.

THE fog blew all that day, so after lunch I crossed the caged-in gangway—known cheerfully as the widowmaker—that joined Treasure Finder to Brent Delta, the three gigantic concrete legs surmounted by eight levels of decks and living quarters that towered over the flotel like a monster from outer space. Brent Delta is a concrete gravity platform, two hundred and twenty-eight thousand two hundred and thirty-two tons in weight, and nine hundred and eighty-one feet high—just three feet shorter than the Eiffel Tower—from its base to the tip of its vertical gas flare. It rests on the seabed in four hundred and sixty-six feet of water and resists any storm by virtue of its own immense weight. Around its legs, far below the surface, are ranks of cylindrical oil-storage tanks with domes as large and smooth as those of an Islamic mosque.

Andrew Wood, the Shell toolpusher on Brent Delta, is a slight, wiry Lancastrian with a blond beard and intense blue eyes, which make him look

like D. H. Lawrence. The walls of his office were plastered with charts and plans of the forty-eight wells that will eventually radiate from the platform. Filling the wall space between them was the usual assortment of nude photographs cut from calendars that are sent out by oil-equipment companies. These photographs are in every offshore office apart from those of the O.I.M.s, who are presumably too senior for frivolity, and admin, where every available inch of wall is crammed with lists of names for accommodation and transport. But the smiling faces and glowing bodies seem to say less about desire than about the loneliness of life out here in the North Sea. Unlike those elsewhere in the field, the nudes on the walls of Andy Wood's office were framed—as a token, perhaps, of his seriousness.

On the way down to the drilling floor, Wood grumbled routinely about the vertical gas flare blazing far above our heads. "When the wind's southerly, it blows the flame over the top of the living quarters," he said. "The ventilators suck it in, and everybody bakes. Then a wind from the north goes straight into the ventilators, and we all freeze. And there's nowt they can do about it." He spoke without conviction—more to have something to say than to make a genuine complaint.

Down on the derrick floor, where the drill roared and spun in the rotary table, Wood began to lecture me on drilling mud, and his manner changed: he became precise, technical, yet curiously passionate, as if this were one of the things he cared most about in the world. He talked about the subtle chemistry of the mud and how critical its weight becomes as the bit moves through different formations; the deeper the bit goes, the heavier the mud must be. "Look," he said. "The hole we're on now is two and a half miles deep, and the pressures down there are enormous. Even so, it takes the mud two hours to travel back from the bit to the surface. Two hours, reet. Now do you get the idea?"

"I suppose so," I said, although all I could see was the intricacy and the huge scale of the operation: not just out here in the North Sea, and not just the extraordinary technology that has been evolved for the job, but the job itself. "The earth has cut an artery," Dusty Woods had said when the Lake View well in the Coalinga field blew out, in 1910. He was right. Oil exploration, like the exploration of space,

deals in a larger dimension of reality than most of us know how to cope with. Beyond the technical sophistication and sheer hard labor is something far stranger, something that has to do with the anatomy of the planet itself. In "The Wildcatters," Tait listed some of the wilder theories of the origins of oil:

One philosopher argued that as the earth was a huge animal, the water its blood, the rocks its bones, the grass and trees its hair, the hills pimples on its face, and Aetna and Vesuvius merely eruptive boils, oil could naturally be secured by boring through the skin into the blubber of the immense creature. Another [declared] that petroleum was the urine of whales conveyed from the North Pole in underground channels. A Methodist revivalist conducting a camp meeting in the 1870s said that petroleum was stored away to be used to destroy the world on the inevitable dreadful day. Perhaps this was the same one who asked the legislators of an oil state about that time to prohibit further drilling because oil was used to light the fires of Hell, which might go out if petroleum continued to be brought to the surface for a profane purpose.

Out here on Brent Delta, with an experienced technician patiently describing to me the logic of the oil-extraction process, all I could think was that the dotty theories that had once tried to explain the mystery of oil were, after all, emotionally justified.

The rock that Andy Wood's crewmen were drilling through was hard and progress was slow, so no pipes would be needed for the next hour or two. The little board high up inside the derrick which I had first noticed on Brent Alpha was unmanned. I pointed up to it, and asked, "What's that called?"

"The monkeyboard."

"And the guy up there, what does he do?"

"The derrickman." Wood looked me up and down critically. His blue eyes glinted. Briefly, I saw myself as he must have seen me: another time-waster from the beach, gray-faced, gray-haired, with a notebook in one hand, a pen in the other, and a tape recorder sticking out of the pocket of his brand-new overalls. "Got a head for heights, have you?" he asked. "Want to go up?"

I looked up at the greasy cables and the great hook moving in the wind. "Why not? Partway, at least."

On the outside of the derrick was a vertical steel ladder, its rungs plastered with oil and mud, as slippery as ice. We climbed to a platform fifty feet above the drilling floor, halfway to the monkeyboard. A foggy wind howled

through the latticework of the girders. We were already above the helideck that sits on top of the living quarters, eight decks plus a hundred or so feet of space above the sea. Painted on the helideck was a big yellow circle with a yellow line sticking out from each side of it, like an axis, and a white "H" at its center. On one side of the deck was painted "Brent D 211/29." I thought, This is how the helicopter pilot sees it as he comes in to land; it's not very big. Off to the right, Treasure Finder lay far below us, diminished and foreshortened by the distance. It seemed to tilt heavily from side to side in the swell, although on board there is only the vaguest sensation of movement, and the one clear evidence that the flotel is not fixed to the seabed is when an unlatched locker door in the cabin swings slowly open and shut.

Wood and I walked around the platform, peering out into the fog. Only Brent Charlie was visible—a blur of lights surmounted by a ponytail of flame. The foghorn boomed, and a small, hard rain came down, soaking through my overalls and bouncing off my plastic helmet. We stuck our heads through the girders and craned upward while Wood explained the derrickman's work. Then he broke off and said, "Might as well see for yourself. Let's go on up." I followed him carefully up the next forty feet. My boots skated on the rungs; the mud oozed through my gloves.

Up at the next level, there was a narrow platform; around the inside of the derrick, metal sheeting helped to protect the monkeyboard from the weather. The board itself jutted out about four feet from the side of the derrick, as narrow as a diving board, and soaked with oil. At either side, at right angles to it, fingers of heavy steel, six inches apart, protruded from the sides of the derrick, ending a few inches short of the board. Along the length of the fingers were short steel bars, hinged so they could swing horizontally through a hundred and eighty degrees, to extend from one finger to the next. A few stands of drilling pipe leaned there like rusty saplings, their tops protruding from between the fingers, each pipe sepa-

rated from the next by the little steel bars. Dangling from a rail behind the monkeyboard was the derrickman's safety harness: a leather belt attached to a length of hemp rope. He leans out on it from his greasy little platform, grabs the top of one of the ninety-foot lengths of pipe racked between the fingers, slides it along the slot next to the monkeyboard, stabilizing it with a rope, and throws it into moving "elevators"—big clamps with handles—

that latch automatically when the pipe is in place. The elevators lock onto one end of the pipe, the roughnecks far below take hold of the other end, and together they move it across to the rotary table and screw it onto the drill string. On a round trip, when the bit is being pulled back up the hole, the process is reversed. The derrickman lassos the end of the pipe, and the clamps are

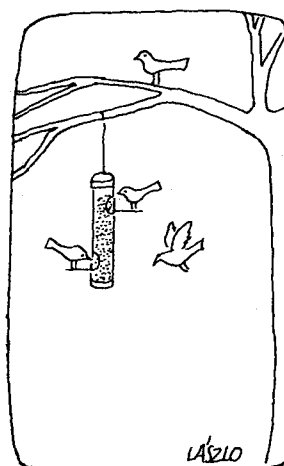
released. He then pulls it along the gap beside the monkeyboard, slots it into place in the fingers, and flicks over the little steel bar that locks the pipe into position and, at the same time, opens up a space between the adjacent fingers. A simple procedure, given sufficient muscle.

"Like tossing the caber," I said.

"Sort of," Wood said. "Only, the pipe bends, see. So the trick is always to go with the swing of the curve. If you pull against it, it's too heavy to move."

Up here, as everywhere else, all the surfaces were greasy and wet, but Wood moved around nonchalantly, as if the stubby monkeyboard and the slippery fingers were as wide as a lawn, and as if there were no gaps between them. He seemed to be enjoying himself. Down on the drilling floor, the roughnecks were reduced to yellow helmets and oily arms and shoulders. The rain pattered against the metal sheeting; the wind whistled in the girders above.

We went out onto a railed catwalk on the outside of the derrick. At one corner was a shallow wooden box containing a parachute harness, a coiled rope, and a friction clutch. "For emergencies," Wood said. "If the derrickman can't climb down, he can strap himself into that and jump." Near it was a smaller box, in which hung a



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breathing mask and a cylinder of oxygen. I asked if any of this equipment had ever been used.

"Not so far. But we check 'em once a week just in case."

We walked around the catwalk and admired the fog. A supply boat, loaded with pipes, was heaving up and down far below, seemingly attached to the installation by the crane, like an aircraft refuelling in flight. From three hundred and fifty feet up, it looked tiny. Brent Delta's decks were a jumble of machinery, containers, and stacked pipes, with pin men in yellow helmets moving busily among them. To our left, the steel trellis of the gas flare rose above us with a chivalric pennon of flame flapping into the fog.

"What a place!" I said.

"You get used to it."

"Speak for yourself."

We went back down the slippery ladder, with the wind tugging at us and the rain stinging our faces. When we reached the derrick floor, Wood grinned and said, "All right."

"My pleasure."

"YOU want to go down the inside of the leg?" the production supervisor asked.

I was in Brent Delta's recreation room, stretched out on a sofa, boots off, feet up, sipping a cup of coffee. The rain had soaked through my overalls and North Cape jacket; there was a layer of damp between my shirt and my back. Well, I thought, at least it will be out of the weather.

The production supervisor was a tall man with a quiet voice and a peaceful manner. He had a ruddy complexion and very regular features. His name was Terry Smart.

"I thought they were full of oil," I said.

"The oil's in the tanks down below. Two of the legs have well-pipes in them, the other houses pumps and things." He eyed my soaked, stained clothes sympathetically and said, "Don't worry. There's a lift."

I followed him down through decks full of machinery to a railed platform at the top of the leg. Beside the elevator doors was a white plastic board, on which we wrote our names with a colored marker pen. Smart handed me a pack like the one I had seen on the derrick, containing breathing equipment. "Just in case something goes wrong with the ventilation," he said. "Not that it ever does."

While we waited for the elevator, I went over to the railing on the oppo-

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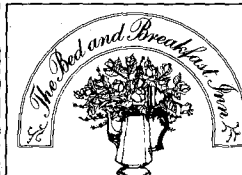
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site side of the platform and peered through a rope mesh and down the central shaft of the leg. It was like laying my ear to the cone of a loud-speaker when the volume is turned up full: a great, deafening column of sound, sporadically lit, dwindling into darkness. Far below was another rope mesh; below that, glinting, inky water. Once again, I felt dwarfed by the sheer size and complexity of the project—of which this, after all, was just one small part.

The elevator doors opened and Smart pressed the bottom button. My ears popped regularly as we dropped.

We came out at the two-hundred-and-twenty-five-foot level, exactly halfway between the bed of the sea and the surface, into a big, noisy circular chamber some fifty feet in diameter. The walls of the leg were gray concrete a yard thick. I laid my hand flat against the dank surface. Beyond it was the North Sea, black and utterly still at this depth, and stretching up to the Arctic. All that darkness and silence were hard to imagine in the din of the machinery, and it seemed odd to be moving freely when a few feet away the pressure would weigh like lead.

The chamber was crammed with roaring booster pumps, which drive the crude oil from where it is stored in the domed tanks clustered around the installation's legs and up a huge pipe that eventually leads it from Brent Delta to Sullom Voe. Next to this pipe were three smaller pipes in which the oil—separated from its gas in the process plant on the module deck—was fed into storage. The elevator shaft dropped free from the upper deck to the two-hundred-and-twenty-five-foot level, a narrow steel staircase spiraling around it and making it look like a gigantic corkscrew. Opposite the elevator doors rose a great square ventilation trunk, and all around the walls were narrower pipes and dense lianas of electric cable, each encased in heavy black rubber. These cables are everywhere on the installations, outside as well as in, climbing vertically and disappearing mysteriously into holes or running horizontally in shallow troughs around all the modules on deck, like some postmodernist architectural motif. "Beats me where they all go," said Smart. "But they're all doing something."

Beneath the steel grille of the deck was a lower deck, housing yet more drumming machinery. Below that was the dark, oily water of the bilges. When I looked back up the square

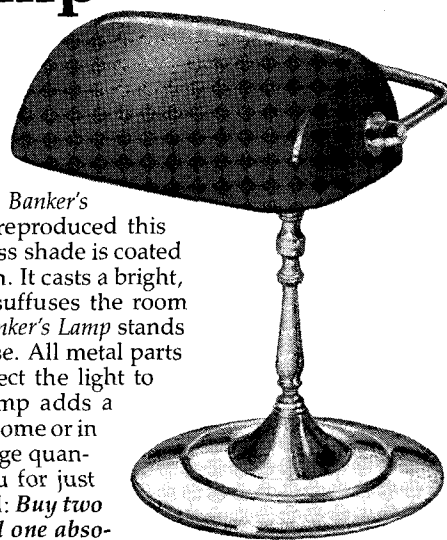
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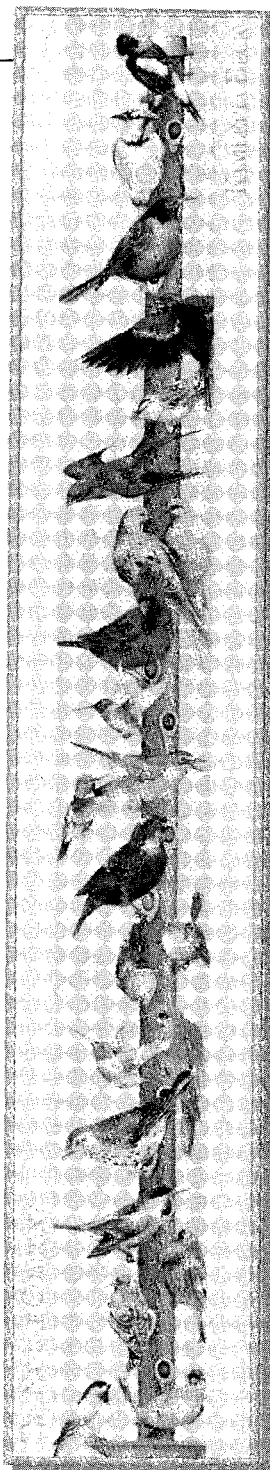
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elevator shaft, in the center of the chamber, I could see three more decks of pumps, diminishing lines of pipes and electric cable, an irregular pattern of spotlights and fluorescent strips. It was like looking up from the bottom of one of Piranesi's imaginary prisons—a vast, enclosed, shadowy place, with gangways and galleries and ominous, purposeful machinery, all of it disproportionate to the human scale. A prison without people, however. The machines went about their noisy business by themselves, untended, monitored by other machines, with men sitting at their consoles, up there in the busy world. Drops of water were falling from somewhere far above. One of them hit me square on the forehead with the impact of a pellet from a BB gun. I pulled my head in sharply.

"We'd best be getting back," Smart said.

As the elevator rocketed up toward the top of the leg, it seemed to me that there was no end to the strangeness of life out here. In the space of one hour, I had been three hundred and fifty feet above the rowdy surface of the sea and two hundred and twenty-five feet below it. In order to understand the offshore world, you had to revise your ideas of geography and distance. The installations are like mountains in a remote Alaskan range: you reach them by air; after that, the significant distances you travel are vertical. But even stranger was the way both my guides took all this for granted. To be poised, working, far above the waves or moving about among engines deep below the surface was for them merely part of the daily routine. But perhaps the only way to function in an environment as hostile and outlandish as that of the North Sea oil fields is to absorb yourself in the details of your work, and cultivate toward everything else—the place, the weather, the scale of the projects, and the continuing improbability of the situation—a busy, sane indifference.

—A. ALVAREZ

(This is the first part of a two-part article.)

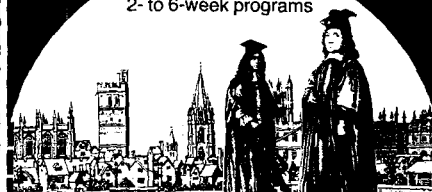
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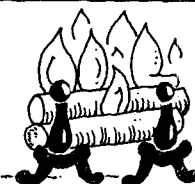


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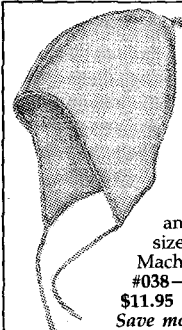


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IN all modesty, I consider myself ideally suited to being a reviewer of murder mysteries, because I am quick to lose count of dead bodies and because any plot so complicated as to require an actor to play two roles is apt to pitch me into a state of enchanted confusion; moreover, if that actor is playing identical twins and if those twins can be distinguished from each other largely by changes of costume and if those changes of costume are frequent and unexpected and if the device of identical twins who are constantly changing their costumes is multiplied in its capacity for deceiving me by the fact that one of the twins is a down-at-heel actor and the other is a wealthy stuffed shirt whom the actor is gifted enough to be able to impersonate convincingly in the presence of a constable and a landlady, then I am sure to praise the work in question to the skies, perhaps comparing it favor-

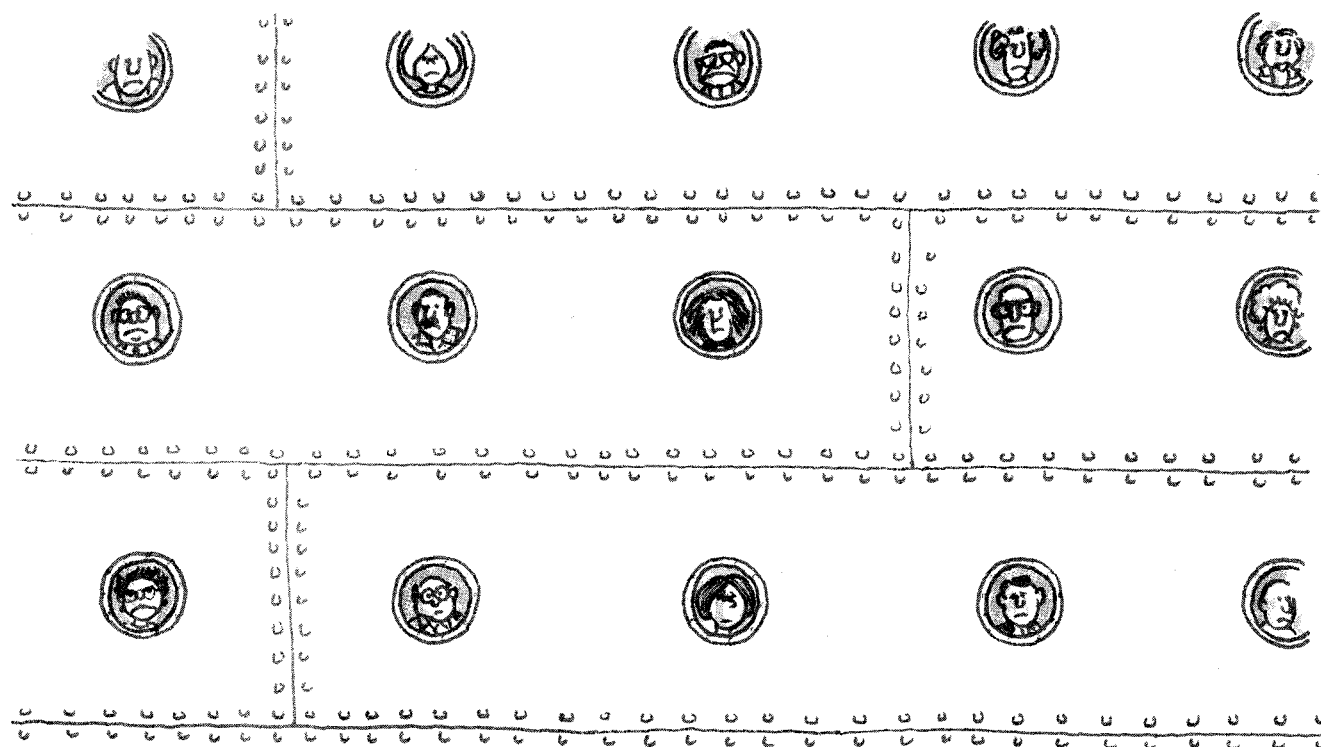
ably to the "Oresteia." Now, everything that I have laid out so clearly in the previous sentence applies—I *think*—to "Corpse!," which, billed as a comedy thriller, has just arrived at the Helen Hayes. The play was written by a young Englishman named Gerald Moon, and before coming here it enjoyed a long run in London, where murder mysteries are indispensable attributes of the local culture, like rain. "Corpse!" approaches being a foul play about foul play, but if it had been any better I would have liked it far less.

It is an unwritten law of theatre reviewing to say as little as possible about what actually takes place in the course of a murder mystery, and this law has always proved highly attractive to me. After the first ten or fifteen minutes of "Corpse!," I was contentedly awash in obfuscation; Keith Baxter as the identical twins and Milo

O'Shea as a trigger-happy Irish scoundrel could do whatever they liked on-stage for as long as they liked, mugging and crooning and the Lord knows what, and when at the end of the evening I consulted the program and discovered that the cast consisted of a total of four people I was hard pressed to account for all the blood-stained bodies I had watched being piled up in the actor's squalid basement digs in Soho and the stuffed shirt's elegant flat in Regent's Park. I do remember that the action of the play takes place on the evening of December 11, 1936, when Edward VIII broadcast his abdication speech to his millions of subjects. Why does it take place then? Well, because it is part of the plot, that's why.

Pauline Flanagan plays the landlady, and Scott LaFeber plays the constable. The settings are by Alan Tagg, the costumes are by Lowell Detweiler, the lighting is by Richard Winkler, and the direction is by John Tillinger. Well done, all!

—BRENDAN GILL



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Taking the Lead

MUSICAL performance is the result of cooperation between composers and their interpreters. In opera, the most elaborate of musical arts, perfectly balanced cooperation is especially hard to attain: singing, acting, and instrumental playing are combined; scenery, lighting, and, often, dancing have their parts; and responsibility for preparing the different ingredients is usually shared by several people. In 1871, Verdi (who had been reading Wagner) prescribed for his mature operas "one superior intelligence to take charge of the costumes, the scenery, the props, the stage direction, etc., in addition to an exceptional musical interpretation." In 1852, Wagner deplored conductors who pay little heed to the staging of operas they conduct—concentration on the score alone leads to "capricious, purely-musical interpretation," with wrong tempi and wrong expression—and he deplored stage directors who pay little heed to the orchestra and as a result are "urged to caprices of another sort." The practice produces a breed of "mere opera singers," content to get up the notes of their roles at the piano and "pick up the dramatic by-play in a few stage rehearsals . . . in whatever fashion may be directed by operatic routine and certain fixed suggestions of the director for their comings and goings." Wagner's concern was mainly with his own operas—the re-

marks form the preamble of his pamphlet "On the Performance of 'Tannhäuser'"—but "it is equally certain that even the sickliest of modern Italian operas would gain immeasurably in representation were due heed paid to the coherence that subsists even in them."

The first rehearsals for an opera, Wagner proposed, should be without music, just spoken—the whole company, including conductor and chorus, present, the stage director in charge. "The singer incapable of reciting his part as a play role, with an expression answering to the *poet's* aim, will certainly be incapable of singing it in accordance with the *composer's* aim." When the play has been mastered, musical rehearsals can begin, and the conductor "has gained a fresh, an essentially heightened viewpoint for his labors." There are companies today who do work in that way, insofar as rehearsal schedules allow. But there are few singers today equipped to take—and, perhaps, few conductors prepared to countenance—the next step that Wagner recommends: the gradual assumption by the singers of the main interpretative responsibility for the performance. A singer, he declares, should first learn the music in tempo, but, once that has been done, "then at last I urge an almost entire abandonment of the rigor of the musical beat, which was up to then a mere mechanical aid to agreement between composer

and singer, but which with the complete attainment of that agreement is to be thrown aside. . . . From the moment when the singer has taken into his fullest knowledge my intentions for the rendering, let him give the freest play to his natural sensibility, nay, even to the physical necessities of his breath in the more agitated passages; and the more creative he can become, the more he will earn my delighted thanks. The conductor will then only have to follow the singer, to keep unbroken the bond between vocal rendering and orchestral accompaniment."

Wagner was writing in days before the orchestra sat in a sunken pit: the players could hear the singers more easily; many of the players, looking past the conductor (who then usually stood by the prompter's box) toward the stage, could see the singers. Even so, Wagner realized, much rehearsal would be needed to give the instrumentalists "exactest knowledge of the vocal phrasing," and the vocal lines, words and music, should be copied into the players' parts (as in old instrumental parts they often are). He distinguished, of course, between a conductor who is a "co-creative artist" and one who merely serves "prima donnas' wayward whims, as their heedful, cringing lackey." But the surest sign of a conductor's having accomplished his task, he said, "would be the ultimate experience, at the production, that his active lead is scarcely noticeable."

I have lately heard two performances of Verdi's "Rigoletto" in which the conductor's active lead was not at all unnoticeable. One was presented in Carnegie Hall earlier this season by the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Riccardo Muti; the other is a Philips recording of the opera, conducted by Giuseppe Sinopoli. Concert or recording-studio performance focusses attention on the relations between composer, conductor, singers, and players, undisturbed by considerations of scenery and staging. It cannot provide a whole performance of an opera, but it can be dramatic. (Long before I'd seen "Rigoletto" in the theatre, I knew it



"Is this a private joke or can anyone join in?"

as a drama from the old Columbia recording eloquently conducted by Lorenzo Molajoli, Riccardo Stracciari its protagonist.) Neither "Muti's 'Rigoletto,'" nor "Sinopoli's 'Rigoletto,'" proved dramatic: the fact that one can refer to the performances in that way indicates, in part, what was wrong. Both conductors were dictating. Neither had accomplished his task of inspiring the singers to take charge, while he accompanied. The conductors must not be blamed too severely, however. Modern singers tend to be reliant, passive interpreters—instruments of a conductor's (and in their acting of a stage director's) will, executants of his ideas about phrasing and tempo. "Co-creation" of the kind that Maria Callas and Tullio Serafin, Callas and Tito Gobbi and Victor De Sabata, Callas and Herbert von Karajan, Renata Tebaldi and Karajan practiced has become rare.

MUTI conducted the New York premiere of the new "Rigoletto" score, edited by Martin Chusid, published by the University of Chicago Press and Casa Ricordi, which is the first volume of the new Verdi edition; and Sinopoli adopted several of its readings. The need for new Verdi scores, closer to what the composer wrote in details of phrasing, dynamics, accentuation, sometimes orchestration, occasionally notes and words, has long been recognized and has often been discussed in these columns. Verdi orchestrated swiftly, commonly indicating dynamics on just one or two of the instrumental lines, slurring and accenting inconsistently, and writing out apparently identical passages with differences. Generations of Ricordi copy editors have amplified and tidied his scores—not unnecessarily, and not unmusically, but typographically in ways that make it impossible to distinguish between what he wrote and what they contributed. In general, they have regularized what was inconsistent and have proposed simple, sure-fire solutions to tricky performing problems. Nearly thirty years ago, the conductor Denis Vaughan challenged the standard Verdi performing material. He had detected more than twenty-seven thousand differences between the autograph of "Falstaff" (which has been published in facsimile) and the current Ricordi score of the opera. He suggested that the composer may not always have intended phrases built on the same notes to be

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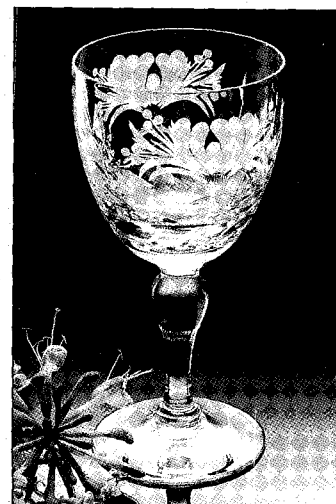
delivered each time in exactly the same way. He speculated whether when in a tutti passage the composer did not mark all the instruments with exactly the same dynamic he may have wanted certain tone colors to predominate. He questioned whether when woodwinds and strings play a phrase in unison they must necessarily observe identical phrasing and articulation if the composer has indicated different ones. A fine old brouhaha resulted, with a 1962 public debate, or "confrontation," in Milan at which the Italian Radio Symphony demonstrated Vaughan's points and a jury including the conductors Antonino Votto, Gabriele Santini, and Carlo Maria Giulini rejected them. But in the long run Vaughan, abetted by conductors and scholars who believe that Verdi, at least some of the time, may have meant exactly what he wrote, has won the day. The new Verdi edition prints what Verdi wrote. It also prints a great deal more, but by various typographical devices distinguishes between the composer's and the editor's ideas.

All the same, this new "Rigoletto" score is in my view somewhat overedited. In the prefatory material, four pages of the autograph are reproduced in facsimile. One of them shows the orchestral start of "La donna è mobile." In the new printed score, these eight bars alone contain some sixty indications—for dynamics, accents, slurs—that Verdi didn't write. All that the composer supplied in the way of dynamics was an initial *pp* for the *cimbasso* (presumably to keep the oom-pah-pah accompaniment from becoming a blurted OOM-pah-pah) and a *p* for the cellos at the sixth bar. Chusid adds *pp* to all the instruments that play the accompaniment (to the pah-pahs as well as to the ooms) and assigns a gratuitous *f* to all the instruments that play the tune. Since this tune sails out four octaves deep—on cellos, bassoon, divided first violins, clarinet, oboe, flute, and piccolo—it hardly needs that *f* to make it tell. The result strikes me as ill balanced and overemphatic. It struck me that way in Muti's performance. (Muti subscribed to pretty well all Chusid's ideas about the interpretation of "Rigoletto" and treated the edited text as gospel.) At the start, Chusid changes Verdi's accents on the first three notes of the tune, $\wedge \wedge \wedge$, to $> > >$. At the sixth bar (corresponding to the words "muta d'accento"), he extends the cellos' *p* to all the instruments playing the tune, reinforcing a "one phrase loud, one phrase soft"



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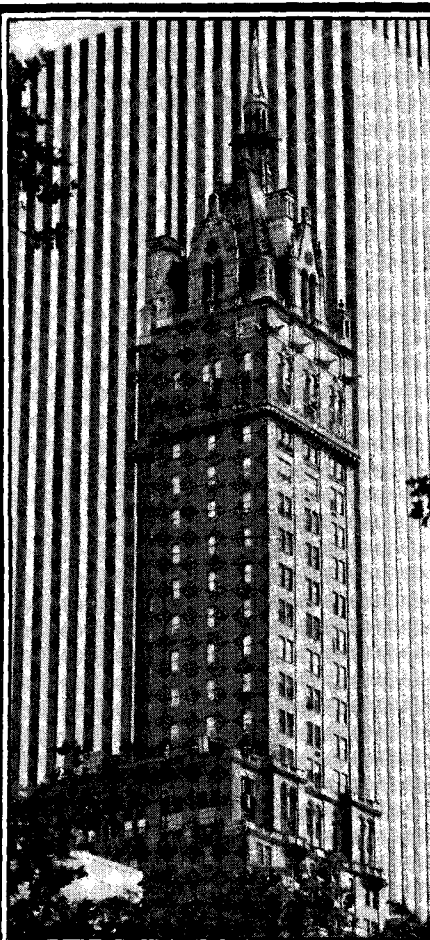
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approach. The previous Ricordi score, edited in 1964 by Mario Parenti and reprinted in 1980, presents a reading that is in fact slightly closer to the autograph—but with the important difference that Parenti's added marks are not typographically distinguished from Verdi's marks, whereas Chusid's are. They are, that is, in the full score, but in the new orchestral parts the editorial additions and alterations are not shown as such. Chusid's decisions are all perfectly reasonable, and the thinking behind them is clearly set out in a companion volume of critical commentary. A conductor has the evidence before him and can make up his own mind. But if he decides on an airier, less strenuous approach to "La donna è mobile" quarts of white-out will be needed. It is easier to pencil markings into instrumental parts than to alter markings already printed. Examination of other passages yields similar results. There has been much regularizing, and where Verdi left dynamics unstated—left them, perhaps, to be determined by the conductor in relation to the particular cast, perhaps even at the particular performance—some dynamic has been firmly supplied.

A GOOD deal of attention was drawn to the absence in Muti's performance of the traditional interpolated high notes; but this has nothing to do with the new edition. The notes have never been printed. (Renato Bruson, the Rigoletto, seemed to miss them: at "E follia!" "Un vindice avrai!" and "All'onda!" he pushed on the lower, printed notes until they shook.) The only note changes that are significantly audible are monotone B's for Gilda's dreamy murmuring of "Gualtier Maldé," toward the close of the aria (instead of a rise to E), and repeated D-flats at the top of Rigoletto's "Miei Signori, perdono, pietate" (with the cresting over to an E-flat reserved for the repeat of the phrase). The first of these readings has already been widely adopted. The second comes as no surprise to users of the Novello or the Boosey "Rigoletto" score; the passage has always been right there. (And it's sung that way on several early recordings.) The noticeable word change is the Duke's order to Sparafucile, in the last act, for "Tua sorella e del vino." The old reading, "Una stanza e del vino," never made sense. Twenty years ago, suspecting that a censor's prudish hand had intervened here, I reinstated



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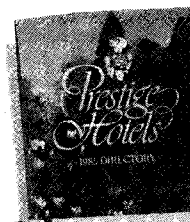
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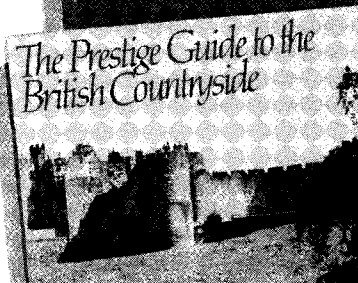
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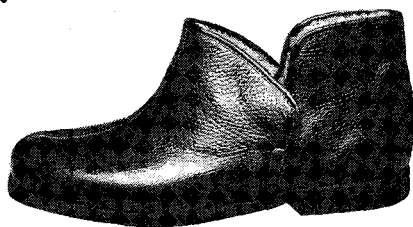
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(from the Hugo play) that "sister" into my English translation; and I'm delighted to discover that that is what Verdi originally wrote.

It was sensible to start the new Verdi edition with a relatively unproblematical opera. "Rigoletto" is one of the few works that Verdi did not revise. The score may bring few major "revelations" in the form of big, striking changes, but in hundreds—in thousands—of small ways it does present a sharper image of the opera that Verdi composed. And they are cumulative. The stage directions, for the first time, are set above the bars during which Verdi intended them to be enacted. David Lawton, who has conducted "Macbeth," "Aida," "La Traviata," and "Il Trovatore" from scores newly edited from the autographs, writes (in an *Opera Quarterly* article), "Differences in sound are subtle but profound, and result from the accumulation of hundreds of details. In every case, restoration of the autograph reading significantly reinforces a musical or dramatic idea. Audiences do and will respond to these details, even if they are not aware of their exact nature." His performances, and Muti's, have proved it.

In one respect, Muti's reading—otherwise so keenly and lovingly focussed on the score and what it means—was as cavalier in approach as that of any despised "traditional" conductor. He paid small attention to the metronome markings. His pulses were generally faster than those indicated, but that of the finale was much slower. Sinopoli observed the markings rather more nearly—just about exactly in "Parmi veder le lagrime," "Tutte le feste," and the Quartet. But this is a big subject; I'll return to it.

—ANDREW PORTER

"You can disparage journalism schools but your newspaper's future is there," he said.

The problems of j-schools, however, is not all of their own doing but something they inherit from the lower grades of education.—*Editorial in Editor & Publisher.*

Noted.

Gossett had signed with the Cleveland Browns before the Breaker season—but he still had to beat out Cleveland's incumbent punter, Steve Cox, a close friend who also had been the groom at his wedding.—*Steve Brandon in the Portland (Ore.) Oregonian.*

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Campers, the oleander shakes
Its brightly polished pocket-
Knives, as at the motorcade
Of some ambassador hurrying
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And every day by late after-
Noon the overwatered lawns
Around the shopping mall
Still burn off brown, their
Pampered opulence upbraided
By the palms' insomniac
Vision of one ineffable, apoc-
Alyptic noon. But the smell
Is somehow sweeter than
That makes you think, a dry,
Lemon sweetness, as if, some-
Where nearby, wild verbena
Had been forced to leaf by
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—SHEROD SANTOS

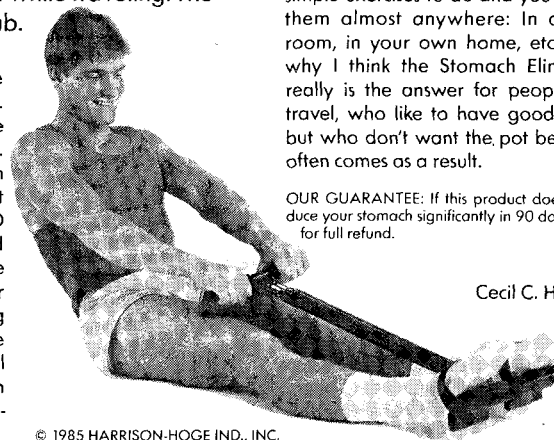
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BOOKS

A Portrait of Alan Turing

I FIRST heard of Alan Turing in 1963, when I was writing a Profile of the computer for this magazine. One day that spring, before a lecture at Columbia, I happened to run into the physicist Freeman Dyson, who asked if I was familiar with Turing's work, and explained to me the essentials of his ideas about the logical organization of computers—"the Turing machine," as his abstract computer is known—and their implications for the limits of computation. Turing had completed this work in April, 1936—he was then twenty-three and a student at Cambridge University. Dyson had known about Turing's work since his own student days at Cambridge, in the nineteen-forties. At that time, Turing was still nominally a Fellow in mathematics at King's College, but he was in fact attached to the Government Code and Cypher School, at Bletchley, which did code work of such a sensitive nature that nothing about it appeared in the open literature until the seventies. Only then did it come to light that while he was at Bletchley Turing had played a significant role in breaking the German "Enigma" codes. His specialty was the so-called Naval Enigma—codes that the Germans used to communicate with their U-boats. The fact that those codes were broken—something the Germans never realized—allowed British convoys to avoid areas where there were U-boat packs, and may well have played as important a part in the battle for Britain as radar. Turing worked at the University of Manchester after the war. He died in 1954, at the age of forty-one.

After my talk with Dyson, I was so taken with Turing's ideas that I tried to read everything I could get my hands on about him and his work. The only book on Turing himself was one that his mother, Sara Turing, wrote in 1959. It is essentially a eulogy. A good deal of it consists of quotations from

admiring letters and reminiscences sent Mrs. Turing by people like Lyn Irvine, the wife of the Cambridge mathematician Maxwell H. A. Newman, to whom in 1936 Turing had handed, with no advance notice, his independently produced paper on the Turing machine. In my Profile, I described Mrs. Turing's book as "moving and lovely." But Lyn Irvine's foreword to the book, read carefully, might suggest that Mrs. Turing's account bears only a passing relation to reality—that there were profoundly dark currents in Turing's life. Turing was "a very strange man, one who never fitted in anywhere quite successfully," Lyn Irvine wrote. "His scattered efforts to appear at home in the upper-middle class circles into which he was born stand out as particularly unsuccessful. He did adopt a few conventions, apparently at random, but he discarded the majority of their ways and ideas without hesitation or apology. Unfortunately the ways of the academic world which might have proved his refuge puzzled and bored him." Why Turing might have sought a refuge is now clear, thanks to a monumentally detailed biography, "Alan Turing: The Enigma," by the British mathematical physicist Andrew Hodges (Simon & Schuster; \$24.95 cloth, \$10.95 paper).

By now we have become accustomed to reading biographies of artists, actors, writers, and even statesmen which discuss the most intimate details of their personal lives. But there is, I think, something disturbing—or, at least, unfamiliar—about reading a comparable biography of a scientist. That is one reason James Watson's book "The Double Helix" came as such a shock to many people. Here was a participant in one of the truly significant discoveries of twentieth-century science revealing himself to be an all too human creature. To those of us who spend most of our lives with scientists, this was not exactly an earth-rending revelation. But there may have been among scientists a sense of betrayal; it was as if Watson had exposed a trade secret—that scientists in their everyday behavior are not especially "scientific." One of the few biographies I can think of in which the sexual life of a scientist plays a significant role is Frank E. Manuel's "A Portrait of Isaac Newton" (1968). It connects Newton's psychological breakdown, in 1693, to repressed homosexual feelings for a Swiss aristocrat named Nicolas Fatio de Duillier, and it created something of a storm among historians of science. Many of them thought that Manuel's interpretations of aspects of Newton's

life, including the relationship with Fatio de Duillier, went beyond the actual evidence, but there also seemed to be a feeling of distaste—a feeling that a biography of perhaps the greatest scientist who has ever lived which emphasized his intimate life, and not his science, was somehow unworthy of its subject. I bring all this up because of the character of Mr. Hodges' biography of Alan Turing. Turing was a homosexual, and to have written a biography of him without dealing with his homosexuality would have been an absurdity. Sara Turing did just that, and in many

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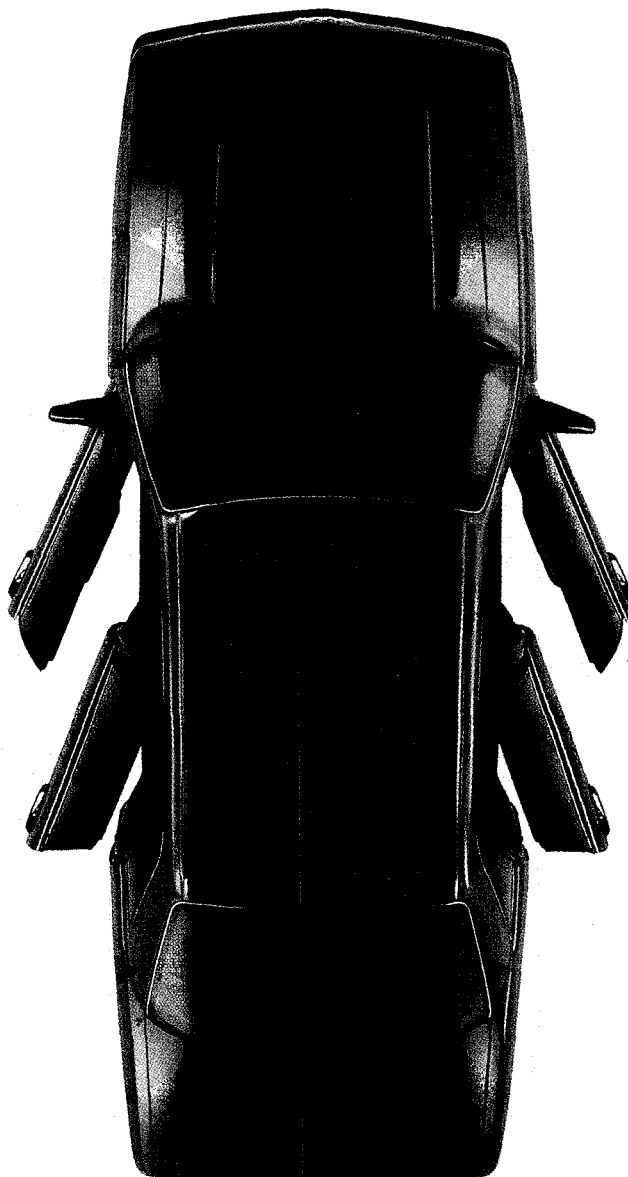
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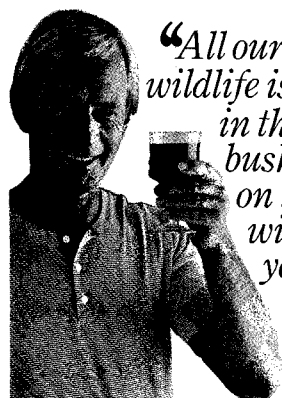
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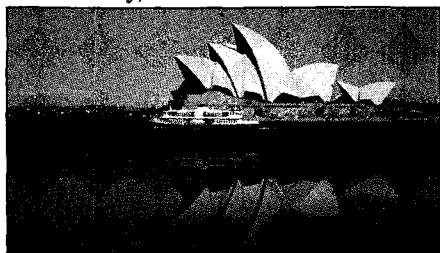
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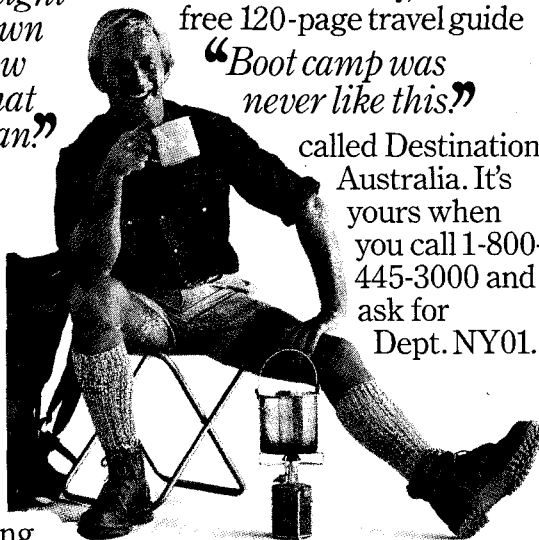


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respects her biography is an absurdity. I wonder, however, whether there are not limits to what we should know, or need to know, about Alan Turing—or, indeed, about anyone—and whether Mr. Hodges has not gone beyond such limits. The intrusion of the question of Turing's homosexuality into areas where it seems to have no relevance threatens to capsize Mr. Hodges' fine book—to turn it from a biography into a political tract. Mr. Hodges identifies himself, in an author's note, as a member of the London Gay Liberation Front. He sees Turing—rightly—as someone who, if he was not driven to his death by public revelation of his homosexuality, had much of the last part of his life destroyed by the consequences of that revelation.

ALAN MATHISON TURING was born on June 23, 1912, in London. His father, Julius Mathison Turing, was in the Indian Civil Service. Turing's mother was a Stoney, and she prided herself on being a distant relative of the Irish physicist George Stoney, whom she had once met as a girl in Dublin. (Stoney is known now, if at all, because in 1891 he coined the name "electron" for the fundamental unit of electricity, which he conjectured had to exist. To Turing, this distant relative represented a bogus scientist, since all he was known for was naming something; the actual particle was discovered in 1897 by the British physicist J. J. Thomson.) Turing's parents met in 1907, on a ship returning from India—Sara Turing's father was an engineer who worked in India—and they were married soon afterward. Turing's older brother, John, was born in 1908. In 1913, the two boys were left in England with a retired Army couple named Ward while the Turings went back to India. During the First World War, the family were briefly reunited in England. Then the parents again returned to India, and the boys were sent off to school. In the nineteen-twenties, after his father's retirement from the Civil Service, Turing's parents settled at Guildford, in Surrey. His father died in 1947, and his mother in 1976.

Mr. Hodges' chapters on Turing's early education are among the most interesting in the book. Later in life, Mr. Hodges notes, Turing said, "The great thing about a public school education is that afterwards, however miserable you are, you know it can

never be quite so bad again." In a footnote, Mr. Hodges remarks that in Turing's case this was "a false prophecy." At his first school, Hazelhurst, Turing did not distinguish himself as a student, but he acquired a very strong interest in chemistry. (At the end of his life, he was doing research in chemistry.) His mother had an exaggerated respect for anyone with any kind of a title; it may have been inevitable for Turing to be sent to a reasonably fashionable public school. In the event, Sherborne was selected, and Turing entered it in 1926. Something of the attitude to science in such schools at the time is suggested in a letter the headmaster wrote to Turing's parents: "If he is to stay at a Public School, he must aim at becoming *educated*. If he is to be solely a *Scientific Specialist*, he is wasting his time at a Public School." This observation came when Turing, at age fourteen, had discovered for himself the infinite series that represents the inverse tangent function—something that I, at least, was taught as a college sophomore.

When one reads Mr. Hodges' account of the social order that prevailed in a place like Sherborne, one marvels that any of the boys emerged psychologically sound. Basically, all that Turing wanted was to be left alone. By the age of sixteen, he had come upon Einstein's theory of relativity, which he was happily teaching himself. His closest friend was another science student, Christopher Morcom, who was a year older. Morcom applied for and won a scholarship at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1929, but before he could take advantage of it he died, of tuberculosis. One of Turing's schoolmates wrote to another boy, "Poor old Turing is nearly knocked out by the shock. They must have been awfully good friends." It was a loss that Turing may never really have got over. For years, he and Mrs. Morcom exchanged correspondence about what Christopher had meant to them. By 1930, Turing was just beginning to find himself to some degree socially. He was made a school prefect—one of the boys in charge of discipline. Mr. Hodges quotes a letter he received from a schoolmate of Turing's which is notable for what it says not only about Turing but about the atmosphere in the public schools:

Turing... was quite a lovable creature but rather sloppy in appearance. [This was a characteristic Turing never lost.] He

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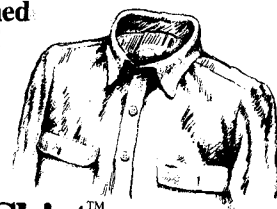
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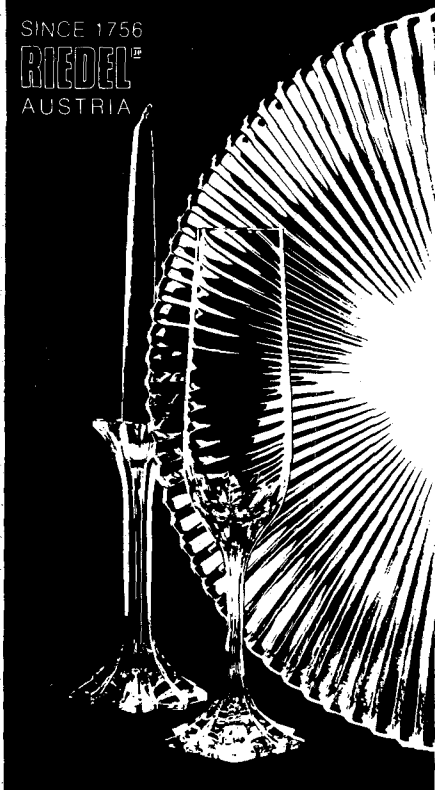
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was a year or more older than me, but we were quite good friends.

One day I saw him shaving in the washroom, with his sleeves loose and his general appearance rather execrable. I said, in a friendly way, "Turing, you look a disgusting sight." He seemed to take it not amiss, but I tactlessly said it a second time. He took offence and told me to stay there and wait for him. I was a bit surprised, but (as the house washroom was the place for beatings) I knew what to expect. He duly re-appeared with a cane, told me to bend over and gave me four. After that he put the cane back and resumed his shaving. Nothing more was said; but I realised that it was my fault and we remained good friends. That subject was never mentioned again.

In the fall of 1931, Turing entered King's College, and began his formal study of advanced mathematics. He had a very successful undergraduate career and in 1935 was awarded a graduate fellowship at King's. That spring, while awaiting the results of his fellowship application, he had attended a course in the foundations of mathematics given by M. H. A. Newman. It is likely that this course changed Turing's professional life. Newman's course ended up with a proof of Gödel's Theorem, which says, in essence, that in systems as complex as arithmetic there must be true statements that are not provable within the context of the axioms that govern the system. There remained, however, a fundamental problem in the foundations of mathematics which was known as the *Entscheidungsproblem*—the "decision problem"—and which had first been stated by the great German mathematician David Hilbert in 1900; namely, is there an algorithm (a "mechanical process," in Newman's phrase) that can be applied essentially automatically to a mathematical statement so as to enable one to decide whether that statement is provable? We are now, in many ways thanks to Turing, so likely to think of these things in terms of computer analogs that it is natural for us to rephrase the question as "Is it possible to write a computer program that could decide in principle whether a given mathematical statement is provable?" What Turing did was to recast Hilbert's problem in exactly that language. To do so, he invented an abstract computing "machine" with an infinitely long tape that could be moved, read, and modified according to very simple rules. While these rules were simple, they were so well constructed that by combining enough simple operations one could program Turing's machine to calculate anything that could be

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calculated on any machine. This universal character of the machine gave it importance in settling questions of what could or could not be programmed on a computer. In particular, any number that was "computable" (such as π or $\sqrt{2}$) could be computed to arbitrary accuracy by using an algorithm—a program—on this machine. Turing discovered that there were numbers that were not computable—no possible algorithm could be devised for computing them. Here, then, was a class of examples which demonstrated that Hilbert's decision problem was unsolvable. It put an end to Hilbert's attempt to demonstrate the formal consistency and completeness of all mathematics.

Turing did this work entirely on his own, and it took him nearly a year to write it up to his satisfaction. The final paper, "On Computable Numbers, with an Application to the Entscheidungsproblem," was published in 1937—Turing was twenty-four—and it remains one of the classic papers of modern mathematics. Turing first presented it to Newman in April of 1936. As it happened, at the same time the Princeton logician Alonzo Church had come up with a different treatment of Hilbert's problem, and he sent a copy of his result to Newman, knowing nothing about Turing's work. Newman immediately wrote to the secretary of the London Mathematical Society suggesting that Turing's paper, because of its originality, be published, and to Church suggesting that Turing might come to Princeton to work with him. In September of 1936, Turing came to Princeton; he took his Ph.D. there under Church in 1938. He also met the great Hungarian-born mathematician John von Neumann, and made such a favorable impression that in 1938 von Neumann offered Turing a job as his assistant at the Institute for Advanced Study. But Turing had decided to return to King's, where he still had a fellowship.

Mr. Hodges learned from an acquaintance of Turing's of that period, a Canadian physicist named Malcolm MacPhail, that as early as 1937 Turing had begun thinking seriously about the possibility of war between Britain and Germany and about what he might contribute to the defense of Britain. While he was working on his Ph.D. thesis in Princeton, he was also working very hard with MacPhail on general questions of cryptanalysis. Turing even sneaked into the machine

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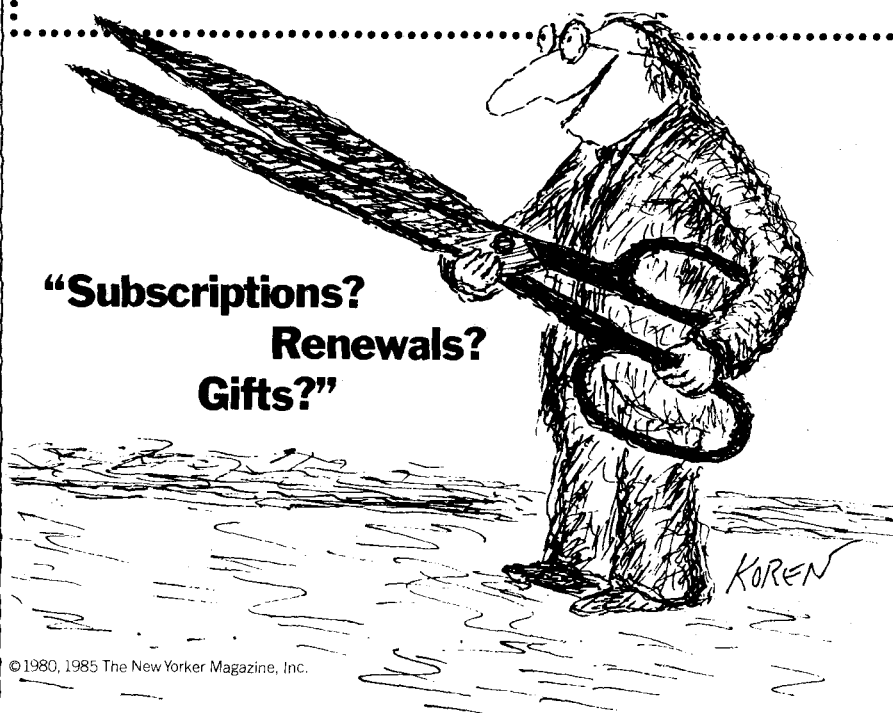
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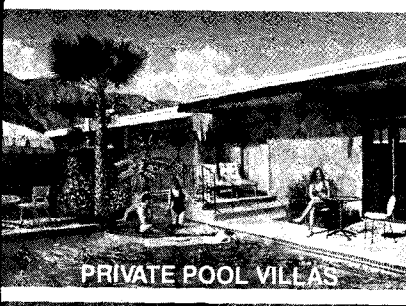
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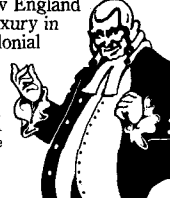
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shop in the Princeton Physics Department and designed and put together an electric multiplier—a calculator that did multiplication—with the idea of using it, somehow, for work with codes. It is not surprising, then, that he was one of the early recruits to the war-enhanced cryptanalysis effort at Bletchley. Mr. Hodges does a fine job of explaining how the Enigma was broken. A reader who would like to learn still more about this might read "The Hut Six Story," by one of Turing's colleagues, Gordon Welchman, which was published by McGraw-Hill in 1982. It is clear that the code breaking was a collaborative effort by a number of brilliant and idiosyncratic people. The Germans made several fundamental mistakes in using the Enigma, and allowed some of the cipher material to fall into British hands. The British nearly lost whatever advantage they had by not taking seriously enough the information that was soon being produced in reams at Bletchley. Its analysis required an enormous effort, which was mounted only after Turing, Welchman, and others there wrote a letter directly to Churchill outlining what they needed. On the day he received it, Churchill instructed his principal staff officer to "make sure they have all they want on extreme priority."

In June, 1946, Turing was awarded the Order of the British Empire for his cryptanalytical work. He by then had accepted a position at the National Physical Laboratory, in Teddington, with a group that was trying to build the first British electronic digital computer. It was to be called the Automatic Computing Engine, or the ACE—a reference to Charles Babbage's Analytical Engine. The ACE was an extremely ambitious project, and, dissatisfied with its slow progress, Turing withdrew from it in 1947 and went to King's. He might have stayed there except that Newman, his old teacher, was directing a computer project at Manchester and persuaded him to accept a special position at the university, which would be funded by the Royal Society. In 1948, Turing moved to Manchester, and it was there that he spent the rest of his life.

Two excerpts from these chapters illustrate Mr. Hodges' polemical emphasis on Turing's sexuality. Chapter 4 is called "The Relay Race"—an allusion partly to the fact that Turing became a high-level competitive long-

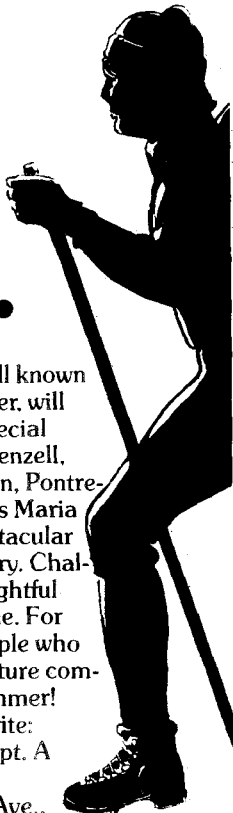
distance runner and partly to the fact that the British and the Germans were in a kind of relay race over the military codes. (Although the Germans never knew that the British had broken the Enigma, they introduced improvements and variations into it, which the British were continually racing to decipher.) This is a fascinating chapter, because it gives the reader a feeling for both the incredible technical complexity of the code-breaking process and the extraordinary atmosphere at Bletchley. In the middle of it, however, Mr. Hodges describes a week in the late summer of 1940 that Turing



spent in Wales with a young Austrian student named Robert Augenfied, who had come to Britain as a refugee in 1939 and, with Turing's help, had been accepted at a public school. Of this week, Mr. Hodges writes, "They went fishing and for long walks over the hills. After a day or two Alan made a gentle sexual approach, but Bob rebuffed it. Alan did not ask again. It did not affect the holiday. Bob perceived that the possibility had been at the back of Alan's mind from the beginning, but did not feel that Alan had taken advantage of him. He was simply not interested." Is this episode something that we really have to know about? There is no attempt by Mr. Hodges to relate it to any general aspect of Turing's character apart from his homosexuality. The subject changes back to U-boats, after a portentous-sounding paragraph: "None of this was quite what Churchill had in mind when calling the British people to brace themselves to their duties, or speaking of the Empire that might last a thousand years. But duty and empires did not solve ciphers, and Churchill never bargained for an Alan Turing." In a chapter describing Turing's early postwar work on electronic computers (as opposed to his prewar work on a model of computation—the Turing machine), Mr. Hodges writes, "And thus it was that in this remote station... working with one assistant in a small hut, and thinking in his spare time, an English homosexual atheist mathematician had conceived of the computer." At least two things leap out at once in this sentence. Reading naively, one might imagine that Turing in fact invented the electronic computer. This is certainly not what Mr. Hodges means, since he goes on to give at some length the history of the modern electronic computer—the real hardware com-

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puter—in which Turing played a minor role. Be this as it may, what possible relevance to this discussion does Turing's homosexuality (or, for that matter, his atheism) have? Was it supposed to confer an intellectual handicap on him, which he had to overcome to create a computer? Are we supposed to feel impressed by the fact that Turing was both a homosexual and a computer designer? This sort of reference to Turing's sexuality seems to me both gratuitous and demeaning. Turing lived under an outmoded legal and moral code, and the temptation for Mr. Hodges to turn his book into a political statement must have been very great indeed. His account of the facts of Turing's life—of what he suffered as a homosexual in a hypocritical society—is eloquent. The biography would have been an even more powerful statement, however, if it had left more unsaid.

IT is not much use to speculate about the choices Turing made in his life, but one cannot help wondering about paths that were not taken. For example, in the spring of 1941 Turing became engaged to a fellow-worker at Bletchley named Joan Clarke. He had told her about his homosexuality, and she was prepared to marry him. But by the end of that summer Turing had found that he had to break the engagement. He quoted to her the lines from Oscar Wilde's "Ballad of Reading Gaol" that begin "Yet each man kills the thing he loves." He could have remained in what Lyn Irvine referred to as the refuge of the academic world. He could have remained in Cambridge, where, with Keynes, Forster, Wittgenstein, and G. H. Hardy, his homosexuality would not have been an object of special scrutiny; even at Manchester, he might have remained within the confines of the university environment. Instead, he made what turned out to be the disastrous mistake of having an affair with a nineteen-year-old unemployed Manchester boy named Arnold Murray, who had been sent back to Manchester on probation after being arrested in London for petty thievery. After Murray had visited him a few times, Turing found that his house had been broken into. He confronted Murray, who said that an acquaintance of his had committed the robbery. On the morning of February 3, 1952, Turing reported his suspicions about the identity of the robber to the police. When detectives called at Turing's house, he admitted

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to them the nature of his relationship with Murray, and he was later charged with the crime of "Gross Indecency contrary to Section 11 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885." Under Section 11, it was illegal to commit any homosexual act, no matter what the circumstances. It was this law that made British homosexuals so vulnerable to blackmail. Turing did not attempt to deny the charges. Murray was also arrested, and both of them faced the virtual certainty of a public trial; the maximum prison sentence was two years. At the very least, the arrest meant that Turing's mother and brother, who knew nothing about his homosexuality (he had seen very little of them during his adult years); would now learn of it. Turing decided to begin by telling his brother, who immediately came to Manchester to help him. Turing then went to Guildford to meet with his mother. She accepted what he told her, and then appears to have ignored it; in her book there is no mention whatsoever of the trial, or of the circumstances that brought it about. Turing's colleagues reacted variously, some accepting his homosexuality and some never speaking to him again. At the trial, which took place on March 31, 1952, M. H. A. Newman was asked if Turing was the sort of person he would receive in his home; he replied that he had already done so.

Both Turing and Murray pleaded guilty. Mr. Hodges notes that if the O.B.E. had been a medal given by the War Office, Turing, upon his conviction, would have had to return it. Since it was an award given by the Foreign Office, he was allowed to keep it. Murray was conditionally discharged, and Turing was given a choice of going to prison or spending a year taking "organotherapy," at the Manchester Royal Infirmary. He chose the therapy. This meant taking prescribed doses of the hormone estrogen, which rendered him impotent and caused him to develop breasts. The treatment was supposed to "cure" homosexuality, and Turing became an experimental subject. He also began seeing a Jungian psychoanalyst. In April, 1953, his probation ended. By then, the hormone had been implanted in his thigh, but Turing removed the implant. In May, he was appointed to a specially created readership at Manchester in the theory of computing, and it appeared that his future was secure. He had been working for some time on problems connect-

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ed with the mathematical growth patterns of plants; in 1952 he had published an important paper on that subject, and he was thought to be working on a sequel. On the evening of June 7, 1954, Turing died, an apparent suicide.

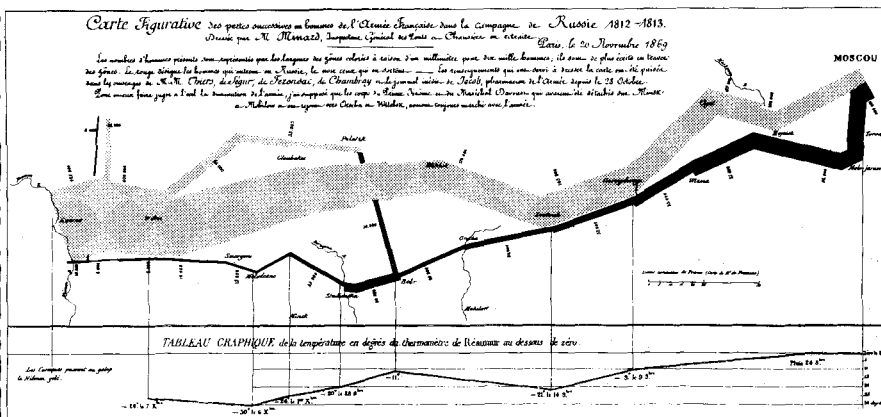
Mr. Hodges writes, "Alan Turing's death came as a shock to those who knew him. It fell into no clear sequence of events. Nothing was explicit—there was no warning, no note of explanation. It seemed an isolated act of self-annihilation." The circumstances were such that they left an aura of ambiguity which will never be resolved. The last sentence in the entry on Turing in the Dictionary of Scientific Biography reads, "He was at work on a general theory [of biological forms] when he died of perhaps accidental poisoning." Mrs. Turing, in her book, makes it clear that, as far as she was concerned, Turing did die by accident. Mr. Hodges presents these facts: Turing was found by his housekeeper "lying neatly in his bed." The pathologist who examined his body concluded immediately that he had died from cyanide poisoning. There were two jars of cyanide in the house. Next to Turing's bed was a half-eaten apple. No one thought to test the apple for cyanide, but the coroner's verdict of suicide went uncontested. (Mr. Hodges notes that Turing had once spoken of apples in connection with methods of committing suicide.) I have always believed that no one—psychiatrist or not—can really understand why someone commits suicide. To most of us, the idea of exiling ourselves to that distant place before we are summoned is inconceivable. Epicurus said, "Death is nothing to us, since when we are, death has not come, and when death has come, we are not." After reading Mr. Hodges' book, I believe that Alan Turing did commit suicide. He led a burdened and tormented life, and death may have seemed the better bargain.

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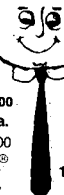
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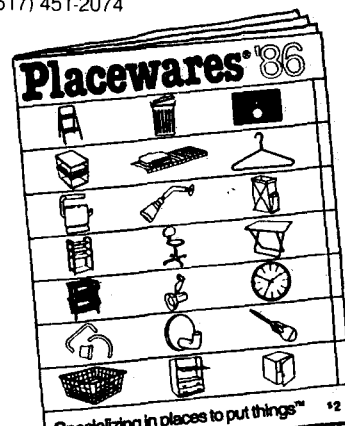
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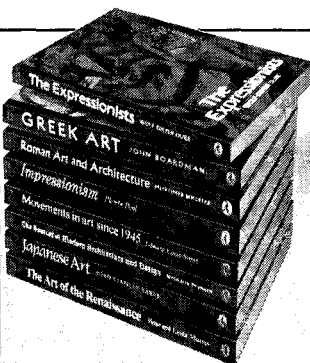


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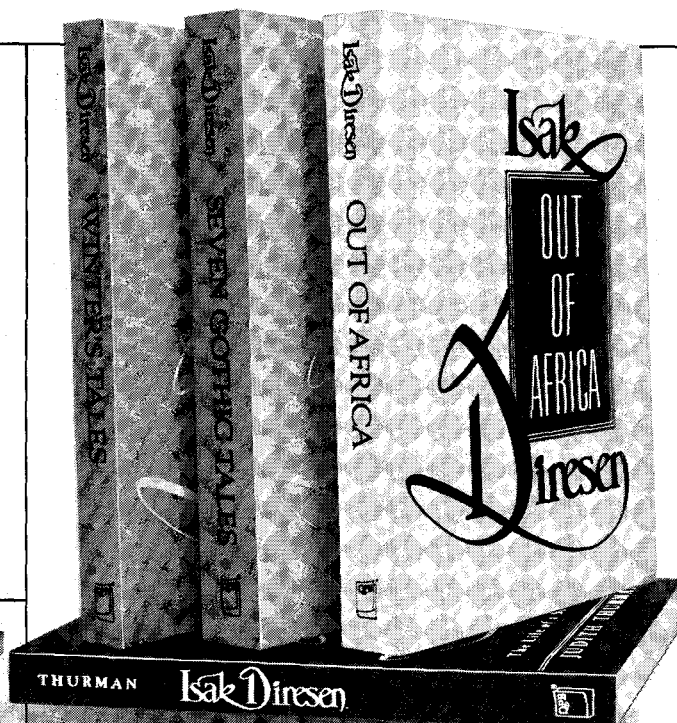


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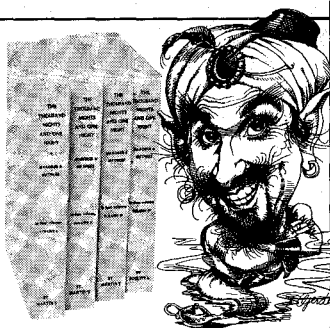


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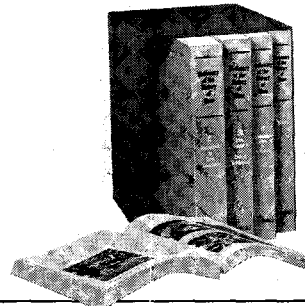
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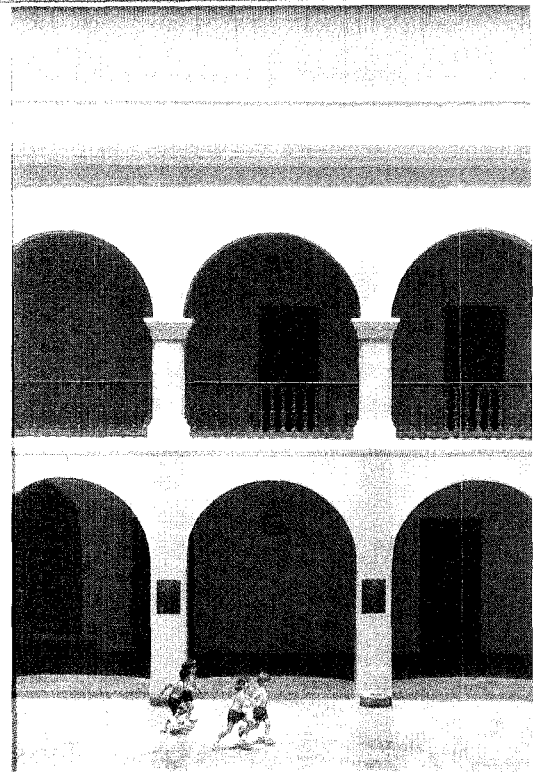
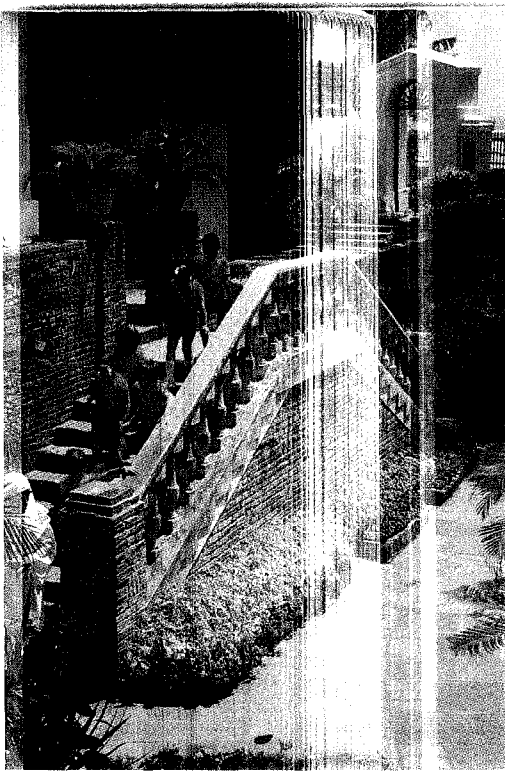
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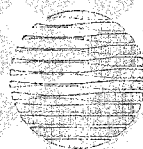
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